

DISSERTATION

EMERGING MARKETS, SUSTAINABLE METHODS: POLITICAL ECONOMY
EMPOWERMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S ROOIBOS TEA SECTOR

Submitted by

Jennifer Anne Keahey

Department of Sociology

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Doctoral Committee:

Advisor: Laura T. Raynolds

Douglas L. Murray

Lori Peek

Mary A. Littrell

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ABSTRACT

EMERGING MARKETS, SUSTAINABLE METHODS: POLITICAL ECONOMY EMPOWERMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S ROOIBOS TEA SECTOR

Twenty-first century markets require rapid and coordinated response to emerging trends in standards and certification, yet inequitable functioning is hindering the ability of global commodity networks to achieve more effective alignment. To begin addressing this concern, I designed and co-implemented a year-long political economy action research project in South Africa's emerging Rooibos tea sector. Via participatory action research (PAR) with a team of farmer leaders and training service providers, I developed a 'Participatory Commodity Network Research' (PCNR) approach to producer-industry support. This dissertation details its conceptual framework, outlines the implementation process, and incorporates action research findings to discuss emerging Rooibos sector constraints and prospects and further problematize commodity networking potential. As I have conceptually designed the PCNR framework to ensure sociocultural flexibility, actors may adapt specific strategies to ground action analysis in diverse product sectors and regions.

Complementary theories and methods frame the PCNR approach: (1) commodity network analysis, (2) sociopolitical theories of power, (3) the human capabilities approach, (4) PAR, and (5) participatory action training-of-trainers (PAToT). From this meta-framework, my project partners and I first developed a set of community workshops for initial capabilities assessment and leadership elections. Democratically elected farmer leaders then participated in

multiple PAToT sessions in areas identified as most critical to market access. Training included managerial, commodity network, and research coursework and activities. As part of this process, the leaders helped develop a set of training materials and designed and facilitated workshops in their communities. In terms of research, the leaders operated as interview respondents, assisted with farmer fieldwork interviews, led final community surveys, and participated in data analysis in order to clarify the multifaceted considerations facing emerging Rooibos farmers as they seek greater representation in trade networks. The leaders also engaged with numerous industry entities and co-facilitated a commodity network policy seminar to explore opportunities for participatory information exchange (PIE) and action planning (PAP).

Despite the promising efforts of many committed groups, emerging Rooibos farmers continue to operate within inequitable terrain that limits their participation and diminishes horizons. These structural impediments are mirrored throughout the value chain, with South African entities constrained by Northern conventions and control, and Northern actors impeded by overly competitive efficiency and pricing demands that hinder potential for long-term investment. Yet this dissertation also demonstrates the presence of agency throughout the Rooibos network, and it draws from the deep well of humanist knowledge to provide a set of pragmatic methods for building upon the best of this agency. If our rapidly globalizing world is to move beyond its current impasse of violent and unbridled cycles of socioeconomic growth and collapse, actors operating across the trade spectrum must transcend dichotomous and outdated assumptions in order to regain control over existing tools, knowledge, and resources and actively collaborate to more effectively realize social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the tradition of Western science, scholars who conduct research are expected to claim ownership of the findings and theories that develop out of their investigations, but researchers who work with people do not operate in a vacuum. Conducting dissertation research is a fundamentally collective process that requires active involvement from more individuals than can be acknowledged in this brief space. Given the participatory and qualitative scope of this research, I have accumulated such considerable debt that my appreciation seems a paltry recompense. I am deeply indebted to my project team as a whole, and to the vibrant communities that welcomed me into their homes and their lives so that I could learn from them.

Without the stalwart support of my Chair and advisor, Dr. Laura Reynolds, I would not be where I am today. When I arrived on her doorstep in 2006, she recognized my potential and taught me to tame my enthusiasm with logic. From her, I learned to crunch numbers, clarify details, and generate a balanced account of complex events that are occurring in the world today. I am also grateful for the assistance provided my broader Committee members, including Drs. Douglas Murray, Lori Peek, and Mary Littrell. Each of these scholars helped to shape the way I think, and they all went above and beyond the call of duty by regularly meeting with me to discuss research and professional development. Throughout my fieldwork, Dr. Peek provided timely advice via email, and after reading my dissertation, she gave me six pages of feedback to help me more effectively develop publications. Although he is formally listed as a Committee Member, I have informally treated Dr. Murray as a Co-Chair by regularly calling on him for professional advice, and his insights have been so good that I have kept coming back for more.

Even with the support of an excellent Committee, this research would not have been possible without the active involvement of my South African colleagues. Dr. Andreis du Toit called upon his resources at the University of the Western Cape to host a policy seminar for this project, enabling us to bring the farmer leaders together with Rooibos network representatives. Sandra Kruger, of Sandra Kruger and Associates (SKA), was central to the project's success. Prior to my arrival in South Africa in 2010, our relationship had been limited to email communiques; yet Sandra readily welcomed me into her office and home. She loaned me the use of her truck so that I could conduct in-depth field research in the rough terrain of Wupperthal, and she gave me weekend retreat at her beautiful cottage upon my return. From the moment we met, Sandra called me sister, and I will always be grateful for her tremendous support.

Lisa Ryser (SKA Financial Manager and Project Coordinator) was instrumental in helping to design and implement this project. Not only did Lisa ensure that everything we did was logistically feasible, she was also responsible for integrating successful training strategies and tools into our work, including the SWOT-V analysis that I discuss in Chapter Three. Olivia Nober Williams (SKA Office Administrator) kindly translated my fieldwork questions into Afrikaans, and she and Zaitun Rosenberg (SKA Training Development and Research Coordinator) spent innumerable hours developing and printing training booklets and monitoring training performance. Additional support staff included Center for Fair and Alternative Trade (CFAT) Research Assistant, Meghan Mordy, who managed paperwork for the project from the United States, and South African Field Research Assistants Rohan Kruger and Robert van Rooyen. Rohan accompanied me during the first two weeks of my field research, and his contributions positively informed the research process, helping us to achieve better outcomes.

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During my time in Pniel, I lived in the warm and welcoming home of Noleen Rose. We are not blood relations, but she treated me like family. Noleen took me hiking, cooked delicious dinners, built fabulous fires, and calmed my nerves with tea and laughter after sundry attempted burglaries and assaults. As an active community organizer, she took me on street patrols that she had organized with other community members to ensure a safer living environment for us all, and she arranged a Pniel delegation to visit one of my research communities in Wupperthal in order to establish inter-community ties. I miss Noleen's spirit of generosity and zest for life.

Last but not least, I wish to thank my own family at home. Over the course of this project, I lost my brother Todd Keahey. We loved one another deeply, but fought for much of our adult lives over political matters. It was he who first set me on the path of theoretical discovery, and it was he who caused me to want to integrate seemingly incompatible epistemologies. Whereas the farmer leaders taught me to stand together, my brother showed me

how to stand strong, and I drew from his sense of courage to defend my dissertation on time, two weeks after his untimely death. Finally, I thank my mother Shaunna Sandersfeld for championing me through thick and thin. She is my best friend and the wisest person I know. My mother has spent a lifetime transcending hardships so that her children would have a gentler path to tread, and I am tremendously grateful for her intelligent and graceful presence in my life.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Jennifer Anne Keahey was born and raised in Utah where she received a B.A. in Anthropology and French from the University of Utah, with a year of study abroad in France. After graduation, she taught English in Japan, served three years as a United States Peace Corps Volunteer in Latvia, and worked in Refugee Resettlement in Salt Lake City where she coordinated a support group for Afghan women. Jennifer resumed academic work at Clark University, receiving an M.A. in International Development and Social Change after conducting extensive fieldwork with organic and biodynamic farmers in Latvia via a Fulbright grant. During this timeframe, she additionally consulted for a rural development organization in Northern Ghana and held an internship within UNESCO's Education Sector in Paris. Jennifer returned to her beloved American West to commence doctoral studies in the Department of Sociology at Colorado State University, receiving graduate certificates in International Political Economy and Women's Studies. Through the Center for Fair and Alternative Trade (CFAT) and in conjunction with South African partners, Jennifer designed and helped implement an integrated market-access training and action research program within South Africa's Rooibos tea sector where she conducted fieldwork throughout 2010. After substantial research in South Africa and subsequent data analysis and writing, she received her Ph.D. Starting in the fall of 2013, Dr. Keahey will be an Assistant Professor of Sociology in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Arizona State University West.

DEDICATION

Met die leiers vir die gemeenskappe

With the leaders for the communities

And for my brother Todd Keahey (1966-2012)

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CHAPTER ONE: EMERGING MARKETS, SUSTAINABLE METHODS

Problem-Opportunity Statement

The rapid growth in market standards and certifications increasingly requires commodity network coordination, and South Africa's Rooibos industry is pursuing integrated growth in order to more effectively capture lucrative market trends. Yet despite rising Southern influence in global policy debates, structural power relations continue to limit the capacity of southern actors to equitably inform multinational trading practices, and as such, South African Rooibos actors remain constrained by North American and European buyer conventions. Inequitable functioning within the Rooibos industry likewise prevents emerging¹ farmers from gaining the skills and resources necessary to transcend historical market and land exclusion. Whereas diverse Rooibos actors have collaborated to achieve collective interests, the cooperative building process has been marked by systemic conflict and crosscutting tensions are hindering emerging farmers from accessing regulated markets such as fairtrade² and organics.

There is a distinct need for commodity network action planning to occur if actors operating across the spectrum of a given product sector are to realize the full potential of twenty-first century markets. While past efforts have not always proven successful, emerging Rooibos farmers are continuing to pioneer more equitable network functioning in conjunction with progressive industry and market entities. The South African Rooibos Council (SARC) recently

¹ The terms 'emerging' and 'smallholder' are employed, but not interchangeably. Terms shape policymaking and land and agrarian scholars note the importance of definition. I use 'emerging' when referring to Black and Coloured farmers and 'smallholder' to discuss this group. (Cousins 2010)

²Fair trade represents the broader movement whereas fairtrade specifically denotes Fairtrade International (FLO) certified production and governance.

has provided formal emerging farmer networking space as part of its Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) portfolio, and diverse groups are deepening their investment in emerging communities. This dissertation clarifies the prospects and pitfalls of integrated commodity networking by detailing a year in the life of an emerging industry. More specifically, it outlines an integrated participatory commodity network research (PCNR) approach in which I developed in tandem with my project partners in 2010. Via action research analysis, I outline the context in which emerging Rooibos actors were operating during time of fieldwork, explain the methods in which my project team employed to stimulate more equitable network functioning, and explore the dimensions impacting ongoing PCNR potential.

Action Research Justification

Alternative markets have become mainstream and profitable. Certified markets consist of multiple standards and governance systems designed to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability. During the 1990s and 2000s, global fair trade sales expanded to meet conscious consumer demand, with fairtrade certified products leading world supply (Raynolds 2009; Raynolds and Long 2007; Raynolds and Wilkinson 2007). In sub-Saharan Africa, diverse groups have embraced ethical consumption trends by integrating certified markets with local development initiatives. Many African fair traders have used gender equity policies to invest in women (Raynolds and Keahey 2009; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010).

In South Africa, social and environmental legal standards are stringent though not effectively enforced. Numerous producer groups have turned to certified markets to capitalize on high-value access, and organizational experts have aligned certification efforts with national standards to more effectively position the country in global markets. South Africa currently plays

a central role in continental fair trade production, both in terms of quantity and new-product innovation. Fair Trade South Africa (FTSA) has cooperated with Fairtrade International (FLO) to introduce a domestic label. South African actors have also aligned with continental efforts to expand benefits and fair trade interest groups are expanding regional ties to develop democratic producer networks and assess continental trade potential. For example, in South Africa, Kraft Foods will soon sell fairtrade certified chocolate via the Cadbury label, relying upon West-African-sourced cocoa and South African manufacture (Fairtrade Africa 2011a).

Africans are pragmatically engaged in fair trade policymaking and diverse platforms are helping to drive global market transformations, but in South Africa emerging farmers have largely been left out of this debate due to ongoing structural inequalities. To equitably participate in the networks that affect their livelihoods, emerging farmers require support. Given the unilateral climate of Northern decision making and the fluid nature of global markets, grassroots producer-industry support mechanisms are critical; yet these remain underdeveloped because the immediate nature of market demands shifts resources away from mid- and long-term goals. To help meet this need, fair trade networks are expanding and streamlining services, but there should be more investment in participatory networking. Certifiers have prioritized hired-labor development, and emerging farmers have only recently entered the fairtrade system via smallholder standards. Four South African smallholder groups currently maintain fairtrade certification, three of which produce Rooibos tea (Fairtrade Foundation 2010; FLO-Cert 2011b).

While emerging Rooibos producers have spearheaded smallholder fairtrade entry, they face unique challenges. Communities lack the capacity and resources to effectively compete with commercial Rooibos communities, some of whom operate under fairtrade hired-labor standards. The fairtrade system has generally separated commodities into hired-labor or smallholder

standards, but this was not done in Rooibos and there have been tensions between these producer groups, although commercial and emerging producers face similar challenges and some note the potential for market collaboration. Given the challenges and opportunities facing emerging Rooibos farmers, action research findings are particularly timely. Emerging Rooibos participation sheds a great deal of insight into critical questions surrounding the diversification of certification approaches, including the integration of multiple producer groups into fair trade systems (Fair Trade USA 2011b; Fairtrade Africa 2011b; Fairtrade International 2011d).

The Standards and Certification Revolution

After the collapse of Soviet- and Apartheid-based governance regimes in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the world witnessed a volatile era of market triumphalism, and a resultant deepening of neoliberal globalization. Scholars examining the postcolonial nature of these trends cite the negative developmental impacts of forced structural readjustment and market liberalization within the Global South (Hoogvelt 2001; Ihonvbere 1995; McMichael 2004). Some have noted how high-risk markets similarly threaten Northern economic wellbeing, particularly among the middle classes (Greider 1997). The financial collapse of 2008 and ongoing downturn further clarifies the interconnected yet highly inequitable nature of the international financial system which long has been characterized within the context of casino capitalism (Strange 1986).

Despite these trends, there is an alternative face to globalization—one in which trade meets regulatory sustainability directives. Neoliberalism has ushered in a post-Fordist era of ‘buyer-driven’ markets (Gereffi 1994; Gereffi 2001), engendering a loss of producer control, but this shift has also facilitated product diversification and the proliferation of standards and certification systems designed to regulate trade. In the North, where ‘the highly branded

corporations and consumers with enough buying power to permit an ethical edge tend to be located” (Conroy 2007: 296), regulators have integrated corporate branding strategies to construct more equitable trade via ethical brand recognition. Yet ideological divisions between fair trade governing bodies continue to generate conflict. In 2011 Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) announced its departure from the European-based FLO system. The centralized governance approaches of Northern groups limit the potential for more democratic trade governance, and this is adversely affecting the millions of members depending upon fair markets for their livelihoods (Fair Trade USA 2011c; Fairtrade Africa 2011b; Fairtrade International 2011d).

To address market tensions, political economists have employed Gramsci’s notions of hegemony and counter hegemony as a means of examining civil society resistance to neoliberalism. Gramsci has noted how hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces vie for power by participating in a ‘war of position’ (Gramsci 1971). More contemporary scholars have used the war-of-position notion to examine activists are constructing a sense of global civil society by developing alternative forms of governance that challenge neoliberal interests (Katz 2006; Keahey et al. 2011; Shreck 2005). In the context of market standards, regulators engage third-party compliance mechanisms to develop lucrative certified markets as a means of reforming trade, while corporate interests seek to coopt ethical discourse by developing internally managed corporate social responsibility (CSR) campaigns to capture these lucrative markets without third-party oversight (Matten and Moon 2008).

The war-of-position framework may likewise illuminate internal movement conflicts as it uncovers the praxis by which opposing groups generate meaning (Cox 1983; Katz 2006). Within the fair trade movement, Northern groups are struggling to balance tensions between those who promote fair trade mainstreaming and those who seek to strengthen core movement

ethics. Southern actors remain at the periphery of global debates but this research demonstrates how African interest groups are transcending traditional market-movement dichotomies: the Global North may be increasingly gridlocked by ideological stalemate, but African actors are designing flexible social change mechanisms to transcend barriers. This continent, and more broadly the Global South, is well-poised to lead the standards and certification revolution (Ferguson 2006; Kruger and du Toit 2007; Raynolds and Keahey 2009; Rugumamu 2005).

Africa has become a primary fairtrade-certified producer region and a major supplier of new products such as wine, fresh fruit, and herbal teas. The number of certified African producers increased by 43 percent between 2007 and 2010, and continental growth suggests the potential for the broader movement to transform market practices historically framed by colonial relations (Fairtrade Africa 2011c; Fairtrade Foundation 2010; FLO-Cert 2011b). African fair trade is closely linked with organic certification as small farmers have traditionally farmed without the use of costly external inputs and wish to profit from organic market demand. Diverse groups have embraced dual certification as a community development strategy, with many initiatives using fair trade gender standards to promote female involvement in recognition of the central role that women play within African economies (Raynolds and Keahey 2009; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). Regional and local levels of examination clarify the multidimensional context of market positioning. Diverse interest groups, operating at multiple geographic levels, alternately cooperate and vie with one another to harness and direct global trading practices. Structural power relations remain deeply entrenched, but traditional North/South and capitalist/civil society dichotomies are morphing.

Globally, the fair trade movement has developed into three distinct governance branches with complementary strengths and weaknesses. All have undergone a name shift as part of a

broader rebranding strategy. Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International rebranded itself as Fairtrade International in 2011 to stress strength through global unity (Fairtrade International 2011a). FLO has traditionally managed product certification of agricultural commodities, and it supports a growing array of goods under hired-labor and/or small-farmer standards (Fairtrade International 2011a). Transfair USA has similarly rebranded itself as Fair Trade USA (FTUSA). Known for aggressive mainstreaming, it has recently announced its resignation from FLO to pursue its own governance strategy. This group appears to be focused on integrating producer group designations in product standards, though shifts are nascent and its direction remains unclear (Fair Trade USA 2011b; Fair Trade USA 2011c).

Somewhat less recently, the International Federation for Alternative Trade rebranded itself as the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) as part of a push toward greater movement realignment (Keahey et al. 2011). Whereas FLO and FTUSA have historically cooperated to develop a highly successful business-mainstreaming approach based on product labeling, the Dutch-based WFTO has developed integrated supply chain governance within handicrafts. WFTO actors work solely with small producer groups, and this governance branch is moving into new commodity sectors to better link small producers with fair trade retailers (WFTO 2011b). Unlike FLO or FTUSA, this group requires all actors—including retailers—to follow fair trade business guidelines. Critical analyses highlight significant movement tensions deriving from these differing approaches, but FLO and WFTO have stressed movement realignment by developing a unified charter for fair trade principles. FTUSA's future relationship with this charter remains to be seen (Fairtrade International 2011a; Keahey et al. 2011; WFTO 2011a).

In recent years, South African fair traders have pursued a number of innovative strategies to streamline movement advocacy, market growth, and services. Their efforts may help improve

regional and global collaboration. While it is unclear how FTUSA will continue to work with African organizations operating within the Fairtrade International system, there are prospects for ongoing cooperation. For example, FTSA is aligned with FLO in its efforts to invest in fairtrade market development production assessment. It recently voted to supply Board space to WFTO-oriented Cooperation for Fairtrade in Africa (COFTA) and Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA), which has pioneered the development of fair trade standards within the tourism sector. FTSA also collaborates directly with Nairobi-based Fairtrade Africa (FTA), the umbrella organization operating as Africa's fairtrade voice. To support producers and build networking capacity, FTA has instituted numerous regional networks, including the Southern African Fair Trade Network (SAFN). This group is headlining regional technical assistance expansion and FTA is now focusing on national network building and South-South trade negotiation.

Additional third-party regulatory systems are expanding their reach into South Africa as well, and producers are facing the prospect of multiple certifications. For example, the UTZ Certified group has moved into Rooibos to expand its tea program. This system maintains strict Codes of Conduct to ensure raw product sustainability, traceability, and farmer independence (UTZ Certified 2011). Similarly to fair trade models, UTZ provides producers with technical training and access to premium pricing, though it requires them to follow a differing small-group organizational model. Finally, Rainforest Alliance is primarily focused upon conservation and climate change, and this group is working to develop sustainable agriculture, forestry, and tourism (Rainforest Alliance 2011). It has also entered Rooibos to expand product development, with South Africa's largest Rooibos processing firm having recently secured both Rainforest Alliance and UTZ Certification (Rooibos Ltd. 2011).

Given the growing complexity of certification systems, FLO-Cert Southern Africa—the independent regional certifier for the FLO system—surveyed global Rooibos traders to determine regional market demand for multiple certifications. According to a respondent, findings from this survey highlight some market commonalities, including a primary demand for organics, somewhat more limited interest in fairtrade, and a desire for natural value-added products. Yet regional market interests differ. In an interview, my informant stated that British traders are most interested in Rainforest Alliance certification, whereas Germans are seeking UTZ products. Japanese traders are prioritizing various quality standards over organics, and traders in the United States generally expresses limited interest in certified items but do desire African branded items “with a message around indigenous growers or production techniques”.

In addition to third-party certifications, CSR initiatives continue to proliferate as companies institute their own ethical lines, though these are generally not subject to external audit. Critics argue that such corporate efforts represent a public relations exercise which ultimately commodify a ‘fair’ image, thereby reinforcing inequitable global trade practices (Matten and Moon 2008), CSR precepts are nevertheless expanding into Southern commerce. In South Africa Woolworths is developing its own line of socially responsible items and, in Rooibos, has secured trading arrangements with the Strandveld Small Farmers Cooperative to promote community-based tea production (Wolworths Holdings Limited 2010).

National and industry-level standards are also on the rise, particularly in South Africa where strong national governance and non-governance groups are actively focused on economic growth as part of the post-Apartheid nation-building process. South African fairtraders have integrated governmental BBBEE requirements into hired-labor standards, though outcomes remain mixed (Fairtrade Foundation 2010; Kruger and du Toit 2007). As the industry networking

body for Rooibos, SARC has developed a Right Rooibos sustainability initiative that is striving for a stringent industry-wide mark. Though efforts are incomplete, the incorporation of such a label may eventually enable the industry to surpass global standards, thereby capturing multiple certifications in a single auditing stream. If successful, this may signify a nascent shift from buyer-driven markets to more balanced commodity networking.

To conclude, twenty-first century markets are rapidly differentiating along multiple lines. Although these developments are promising for emerging Rooibos farmers, the multifaceted legacies of Apartheid and colonialism continue to constrict growth. Less advantaged producers and farmworkers remain marginalized within mainstream as well as alternative commodity networks, and because of this, they lack the capacity to effectively harness evolving trends in standards and certifications. Some emerging Rooibos producers have lost fairtrade and organic certification, and as Chapter Five details, cooperative decertification has engendered significant community conflict. As has been documented in the literature on other fair and alternative trade commodities, certifications require in-depth managerial expertise that requires significant professional training (Raynolds et al. 2004; Taylor 2005; Taylor et al. 2005). Without long-term technical training and effective industry representation, regulatory innovations may fall short of their promise, leaving underrepresented producers buffeted by fractious external systems of which they have negligible knowledge or influence. Thus, it is unclear whether certified market differentiation will help to expand producer opportunities, or further entrench systemic inequalities wrought by centuries of interlocking privilege and oppression.

Colonialism, Apartheid, and Reconciliation

It is impossible to detail a full history, but this section offers a historical overview of colonialism, Apartheid, and reconciliation to socio-culturally ground research findings and extrapolate emerging Rooibos sector challenges and prospects within the broader context of national development. South Africa is a highly heterogeneous nation. It became a representative democracy in 1994 when Nelson Mandela was sworn in as president, ending decades of legally mandated Apartheid. Previously noted for its brutal race relations, Post-Apartheid South Africa became recognized as a beacon of hope for other nations experiencing protracted civil strife (Thompson 2001; Tutu 1999). Nearly two decades into the post-Apartheid nation-building process, South Africa remains oriented toward pluralist reformation. National legislation is progressive: laws are engineered to embrace differences and the structural pursuit of equality. Citizens enjoy numerous sociopolitical freedoms—including gay marriage rights—and external regulatory mechanisms play an important role in ensuring these freedoms, though just as anywhere, human rights records are not fully maintained (Cock 2003; Hamann et al. 2009). At the same time, resource and income inequalities remain extreme, particularly within rural areas where unemployment is high. Despite strong governance and national efforts to expand economic empowerment to less advantaged communities, racial and ethnic tensions continue to impact socioeconomic growth (Hamann et al. 2009; Hoogeveen and Özler 2005).

Touted as the ‘cradle of humankind’, some of the earliest records of human activity have been unearthed in South Africa. Historically, the local population consisted of Khoekhoe³ pastoralists and San hunter-gatherers as well as Black populations—including the Xhosa and Zulu—which had previously migrated into the area beginning around 300 CE. In 1487 a

³ The traditional spelling is Khoikhoi, though Khoe is more linguistically representative (Besten 2009).

Portuguese expedition landed in Mossel Bay, heralding the arrival of Europeans. Contact between European and local populations was minimal until the mid-seventeenth century when the Dutch East India Company founded a station at the Cape of Good Hope to stabilize its West/East trade route (Besten 2009; Thompson 2001). At this time, the Dutch Renaissance was occurring, largely driven by mercantilists who were expanding their reach into Asia and the Americas in their search for lucrative goods. Renaissance mercantilism engendered colonialism as monarchies fought with one another to control access to far-flung ports. Greater Europe was in foment during this period of tumultuous expansion, with trade activities strengthening state control and disrupting longstanding feudal and religious traditions and obligations (Brook 2008).

In the eighteenth century, Protestant dissidents fled conflict in the European continent and began to establish themselves as farmers (Boers) in the Cape Colony. Ancestors to present-day Afrikaners as well as Coloured⁴ people, the Boers were highly religious and fiercely valued individualism, land, and freedom, though not all subscribed to Calvinist doctrine (de Gruchy and de Gruchy 2005; Olivier 2009). Expanding into the interior, this population fought the indigenous Khoe-San, who were largely decimated in the struggle for land, and Cape officials imported slaves from Indonesia, India, Ceylon, Madagascar, and Mozambique to supply the growing labor demand. A large Coloured population settled in and around Cape Town where it developed a vibrant Cape-Malay culture, but many traveled northeast into the frontier as servants and farmworkers, intermingling with the Boers and Khoe-San (Penn 2005).

⁴ In South Africa, 'Coloured' primarily denotes mixed-race individuals, though some segments of this population such as the Khoe-San are more racially homogenous. While broadly accepted and in official use, this term is problematic as the Apartheid government used it as a tool for segregation. Some prefer 'bruin mense' (brown people), and others choose 'Black' to express unity. Farmer leaders could not reach full consensus on a term. I have chosen to generally maintain 'Coloured' in its South African spelling to ensure historicity and highlight cultural uniqueness; but I broadly use 'Black' and 'Brown' when expressing the views of those engaging this term.

During my fieldwork, community elders noted that some of these early pioneers became independent homesteaders in the western Cederberg before the area fell under the ownership of the Moravian Church, and though the topic remains under-examined, historians likewise note the expansion of Coloureds into the most remote regions of the Cape. Indeed, in response to increasing marginalization, a group of adventurous Coloured people formed in the nineteenth century to seek freedom deep in the veld. This movement shaped the formation of the Coloured Griqua tribe which developed an Afrikaans-speaking, Christian, gun-bearing culture that managed to carve out territory, though when diamonds were discovered in their lands, the government forced the Griqua to relocate to the east, where it used these people to form a geographic and cultural barrier between the Whites and the Black Zulu (Penn 2005).

By the nineteenth century, British imperialist interests were becoming entrenched in southern Africa. As English-speaking Whites settled into cities and took control of trade and governance, many Afrikaners retreated more deeply into the interior to form independent republics. In the 1830s slaves were emancipated within the Cape Colony, and during the same period, 5,000 White Afrikaners left with their Coloured servants, starting what has since become known as the ‘Great Trek’. This continued throughout the nineteenth century. In the late 1800s, ethnic strife between the British and Afrikaners led to the first Anglo-Boer war, and while the Afrikaners initially triumphed, the English conquered the Afrikaner Republics during the second war that occurred at the turn of the century (Thompson 2001). At this time, the British held more than 200,000 Afrikaners—predominantly women and children—and their farmworkers in concentration camps, where nearly 50,000 perished. The end of Anglo-Boer wars superficially restored White relations, but this holocaust was never redressed (Tutu 1999). Indeed, the causes of Apartheid are complex but may in part be viewed as an outcome of protracted British-

Afrikaner conflict (de Gruchy and de Gruchy 2005) and tensions continue to exist within the White population though ‘liberal’ British and ‘conservative’ Afrikaner traditions have both played a role in justifying racial and cultural discrimination (More 2004b).

While the Whites fought one another, Black and Coloured groups continued to lose land. In the nineteenth century, “White capitalists, the Dutch Reformed Church and the Moravian Church, and colonial and national authorities began to eliminate freeholders whose land rights and access to local markets sustained their communities” (Everingham and Jannecke 2006) :547, This dispossession affected the ancestors of emerging Rooibos farmers (Ngcwangu 2007; Wupperthal Rooibos Tea Association 2005). By the early twentieth century, Coloured people owned very little land, but poor White groups and Black populations were still subsistence farmers (Feinstein 2005; Thompson 2001). This changed when the government passed the Natives Land Act in 1913, restricting Black ownership to small reserves. Once people could no longer grow enough food for survival, these areas became cheap labor sources for White agriculturalists and capitalists (Feinstein 2005; Thompson 2001).

At the end of the Anglo-Boer wars, the colonies dissolved and the country became a self-governing union under the British Commonwealth. The new constitution legalized racial discrimination throughout South Africa, ultimately eradicating the limited rights that Coloured people had been able to achieve in the Cape Colony. Herbert Spencer’s philosophy of social-Darwinism was popularized, and South African political discourse became starkly racist. During South African Native Affairs negotiations, an Anglophone parliament member argued in favor of White supremacy and racial segregation, stating that “the negro races occupy the lowest position in the evolutionary scale” (Fredrickson 1981: 196). These moves and arguments paralleled the

expansion of Jim Crow segregation occurring in the United States, where reactionary measures to slave emancipation were being installed.

Despite these setbacks, South African Black, Coloured, and Indian communities remained politically active, if not effectively united. In 1893, Mohandas Gandhi arrived in the country where he spent 21 years developing passive resistance campaigns with Indian groups living in Natal and the Transvaal before returning home to lead India to independence. Black ethnic groups formed the South African Native National Congress in 1912, and this party later became the African National Congress (ANC), which has continued to dominate South African politics since Mandela's formative presidency (Thompson 2001). In 1902, Cape Coloured communities instituted the African Political Organization (APO) to address Cape segregation concerns, and this group drove Coloured politics until the late 1930s (Adhikari 2006). Nevertheless, the country inexorably advanced toward Apartheid.

In 1946, the nation was rocked by strikes led by mine workers who demanded living wages. The White-controlled government responded by sending troops to force these predominantly Black workers back into the mines. The Afrikaner National Party came into power in 1948, and under the banner of nationalism, expanded segregation by instituting Apartheid, which translates into 'apartness', or perhaps more accurately, the condition of being held apart. The government constructed a 'separate-but-equal' development program, instituting strict legislation to control all racial and ethnic groups. As a result, the nation developed "a policy of separation or exclusion that went beyond the Jim Crow system in its rigor and comprehensiveness" (Fredrickson 1981: 269). Indeed, the government forcibly removed Black and Coloured people from historical communities, relocating them in townships and homelands, while claiming that removal was voluntary (Feinstein 2005; Thompson 2001). In 1961, South

Africa left the British Commonwealth, and three years later Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island along with other anti-Apartheid leaders.

As Apartheid deepened, South Africans split into three major factions: those who defended the system, those who remained neutral, and those who fought against it. Liberal English-speaking universities became increasingly apolitical and analytical. Dissidents were largely pluralist and/or Marxist in orientation and pursued consciousness-building and direct action to pursue a dream that seemed increasingly unobtainable. A small number of Afrikaner intellectuals continued to publically speak against Apartheid despite the risk of professional and social ostracism (More 2004b). As communities resisted, Black Consciousness expanded, sparking ongoing protest and violence, including the infamous 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, 1970s uprisings in Soweto and other townships, and 1980s Children's Revolution in which hundreds of children demanded change, and were jailed and tortured for their actions. The nation succored and lost unforgettably charismatic leaders (Biko 1978; Feinstein 2005; Thompson 2001).

To pacify reform-minded South Africans, Apartheid governance justified its autocratic rule by extolling the threat of communism and actively engaging in misinformation campaigns. State leadership stated that segregation was a necessary mechanism for national economic growth. According to Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko, "the overall success of the white power structure has been in managing to bind the whites together in defence of the status quo" (Biko 1978: 89). As a result, all populations suffered: White suicide rates were extreme, and murder within Black and Coloured communities was common (Feinstein 2005; Thompson 2001). The state responded to dissident activity as an act of terrorism, and used direct public force as well as closeted torture to maintain seemingly peaceful order. This forced anti-Apartheid activists to go underground where infighting developed. A segment of ANC dissidents began to

commit grave abuses, including the practice of ‘necklacing’, whereby tires filled with kerosene were placed around the necks of accused collaborators and lit on fire (Thompson 2001; Tutu 1999). As both state-sanctioned and protest violence spread, Apartheid-era abuses became known abroad, and the country was increasingly marginalized in global trade relationships.

In 1984 the country drafted a new constitution as part of a preliminary thaw in race relations. This provided for the limited participation of Indians and Coloureds in governance but continued to exclude Blacks. Anti-Apartheid activists derided the constitution, claiming it was a tactic designed to enflame racial tensions and prevent unified resistance. Nevertheless in 1989, Frederik Willem de Klerk was elected president and began efforts to end Apartheid. In 1990 he released Mandela and other political prisoners and rescinded the ban on the ANC and other political groups. In many ways these two leaders were opposites: whereas Mandela was a Xhosa-speaking anti-Apartheid activist who had been held in prison for 27 years under charges of terrorism, de Klerk was a White Afrikaner who had held numerous official posts under the Apartheid regime. Both were charismatic leaders who played a strong role in dismantling the system and developing more equitable governance. Upon his release from prison, Mandela led ANC negotiations for democratic restructuring. In 1994 Apartheid formally ended when the ANC won South Africa’s first democratic election running under a banner of non-racism, non-sexism, and democracy (More 2004a; Thompson 2001; Tutu 1999).

As South Africa’s first Black president, Nelson Mandela focused on building a government that would bring people of all races and ethnicities together. Post-Apartheid governance invoked the notion of ‘rainbow nation’ to construct a pluralist South African identity. Reformers, such as Desmond Tutu, noted the atrocities suffered by Afrikaners in the second Anglo-Boer war and engaged the African humanist concept of *Ubuntu* to promote multiracial

unity and break the cycle of crosscutting racial and ethnic conflict. This concept highlights the importance of social wellbeing for individual health and prosperity. Whereas French philosophy links existence to individual mind (I think therefore I am), *Ubuntu* and broader African philosophy emphasizes relational identity (I exist through others, therefore we are).

Building from humanist precepts, the new South African government developed a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to redress Apartheid-era crimes against humanity. This deeply emotional process held the attention of the world as Apartheid implementers faced victims and the families of victims to hear their testimony and confess their crimes in return for amnesty. TRC activities may have been imperfect, but they instituted a policy of judgment and forgiveness rather than one of punishment and forgetting, and this was central to preventing civil war (Duvenage 2004; Thompson 2001; Tutu 1999). Apart from reconciliation, “the Mandela government had two major goals: to create growth and to improve the quality of life for the majority of the citizens” (Thompson 2001: 278).

South African governance continues to focus on these concerns, but whereas Commission activities united diverse populations during a period of national healing, racial tensions and socioeconomic inequalities persist. Crime rates remain high as well, and fear of crime takes a toll on social wellbeing. During Apartheid, the government argued the necessity of restricting non-White wages for capitalism to survive. Due to the existence of rich national resources within South Africa’s borders, the economy initially grew, but this growth proved unstable. The demise of Apartheid was fueled in part by the negative economic impacts wrought by extreme inequalities. Moreover, Apartheid-era commerce was monopolistic in orientation, and growth potential was stifled due to the “poor standard of labour productivity relative to that elsewhere” (Feinstein 2005: 245).

This socioeconomic past continues to haunt South Africa's present and future, but a variety of governmental, civic, and business actors are struggling to transform market-based inequalities into models of greater representation and productivity, and in many ways the country continues to shine. South Africa's engaged governmental and civil societies continue to demonstrate the prospects as well as pitfalls of conscious action and during 2010 World Cup festivities, crime rates remained low as South Africans united to demonstrate their hospitality. Thus post-Apartheid South Africa is a nation of hope and a land of despair. To realize the true value of its vibrantly heterogeneous population, the country must continue to reconcile in the spirit of *ubuntu* (Thompson 2001; Tutu 1999).

The 'Coloured' Question

Today's racially diverse Coloured population derives from the intermingling of indigenous, Asian, Black, and European populations, and while Afrikaans has been largely portrayed as a White tongue, and more symbolically as the language of Apartheid, it continues to evolve as a polyglot dialect spoken by Coloured and White Afrikaner populations (Roberge 1995). In early colonial centuries, race relations remained somewhat fluid and intermarriage did occur. It was even encouraged due to the dearth of White women, and certain mixed-marriage children rose to prominent colonial positions (Fredrickson 1981). Indeed, "under more favorable circumstances, the people who became known as Coloured People might have been expected to merge socially and biologically with the Afrikaners" (Thompson 2001: 66). While South Africa's long history of segregation has prevented this, these two groups are close cousins in the national family tree, and during fieldwork numerous White and Coloured informants emphasized their shared sociocultural value system and religious traditions.

Coloured people represent a potential bridge between Whites and Blacks though their mixed-race identity has been buried by the polarization of South African race politics. Not only is this group economically marginalized, Coloureds comprise only nine percent of the total population, and their racial and cultural heterogeneity further complicates visibility. Brown informants often told me that they are neither Black nor White enough, and scholars likewise note this sense of racial ambiguity (Adhikari 2006). Coloured people “commonly argue that brown does not appear in the rainbow, which also evokes the image of the opposite ends of the spectrum not meeting” (Ruiters 2009: 106). Some of my respondents felt the ‘rainbow nation’ ideology is counterproductive because it implies separate colors, obscuring the potential for integration. To inform identity, South African Coloureds are distinctly interested in revisiting history, though they are pursuing diverse approaches. Certain groups have shifted to a Khoe-San identity to recapture their ancestral heritage and secure indigenous benefits. The future of Coloured identity is shifting, but will by no means be monolithic (Adhikari 2006; Besten 2009).

Post-Apartheid Agriculture

Political transformations have made broad impacts within South Africa’s agricultural sector. The government is striving for racial farm ownership equity through its BBBEE initiative (AgriBEE 2005). Gender concerns likewise are prioritized, and multiple organizations represent female agricultural interests. The government coordinates the Women in Agriculture and Rural Development Programme (WARD) to promote female land rights and capacity building (Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs 2006). The NGO ‘Women on Farms’ engages women’s interests and has helped found Sikhula Sonke, a female-led union of over 4,000 members (Kritzinger and Vorster 1998). At the time of research this union was expanding and had begun to explore possibilities for entering the emerging farmer sector. In other words,

BBBEE and women's organizations primarily operate in hired labor to secure farmworker rights, but emerging farmer concerns increasingly are garnering their attention as well.

The government denotes producers of color as 'emerging' farmers to recognize their historical marginalization from land ownership and market participation. An emerging farmer may practice either large-scale or small-scale farming, but the stark majority of these remain small farmers, due to ongoing racial inequalities in land tenure. As a result, actors tend to interchangeably employ 'emerging farmer' and 'small farmer' terminology. These terms are not exclusive, but nor are they the same. Scholars question 'small farmer' definitions, which are not precise. As terminology informs resource flows and land reform debates, these concerns are critical, and both land and yield size should be taken into consideration (Cousins 2010; Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010). Following the practices of my South African colleagues, I define 'small farmer' as those renting or owning up to 10 hectares and producing a maximum yield of 10 tons. Operating at less than five hectares, the emerging farmers participating in this study are quite small. Indeed, hundreds of Wupperthal families eke a living from rented parcels which combined, would support two average-sized White commercial farms.

Despite South African efforts to equalize emerging farmer participation in production and market arenas, the quality of these efforts has been variable, and stark disparities remain. Though some White farmers may be classified as small, as a whole, this racial group continues to own nearly all of the land. Meanwhile, Black and Coloureds largely remain relegated to positions of labor, and women tend to have less access to resources, information, and opportunities, than their male peers (Njiro 2007). With its focus on gender equity, fairtrade alignment with BBBEE offers scope for mitigating both race- and gender-based labor disadvantages, but neither fairtrade nor BBBEE roles have been adequately addressed among emerging farmer populations.

Rooibos

Rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*) is a member of the Cape *fynbos* floral kingdom, which among the world's six floral kingdoms is the smallest and wholly contained within South Africa (Binns et al. 2007; Wilson 2005). Production traditionally has been limited to the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC), with the highest quality tea produced in the dry northeastern slope where Rooibos still grows wild. However, Strandveld Cooperative producers are now growing it within similar *fynbos* terrain in the southern Cape, and here the bush grows rapidly due to increased rainfall although the wetter environment also poses some production challenges as discussed in Chapter Five.



Figure 1.1: Rooibos



Figure 1.2: Fynbos Protea

Kindly provided by the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (2013) and (Cape Nature (2007), Figure 1.3 details a map of the Cederberg where nearly all of the world's supply of Rooibos is grown.

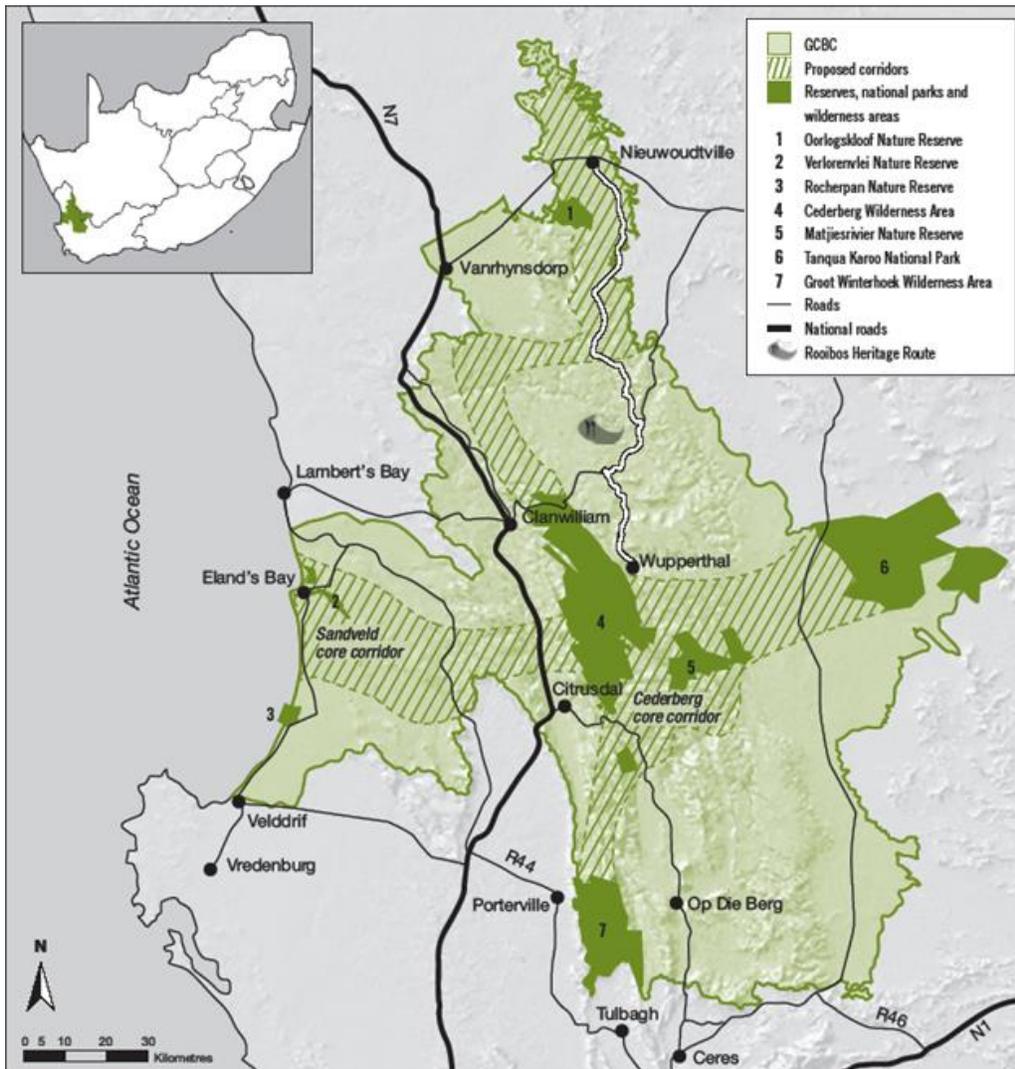


Figure 1.3: The Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC)

Source: (Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor 2013)

Whereas commercial production extends from the wetter western slope into the valleys and plains along the Atlantic coast, emerging producers farm the arid eastern slope, in and around the mountains of Wupperthal and in the southern Bokkeveld plains to the north. Most groups live on marginal land, with high biodiversity value, where scant rainfall constrains farming. Yet the tea produced in this area is noted for its superior quality, and some farmers also harvest wild Rooibos (Binns et al. 2007; Nel et al. 2007).



Figure 1.4: The Eastern Cederberg

Within the GCBC, the Wupperthal area may represent the cultural point-of-origin for Rooibos. Residents historically harvested wild tea and as one informant stated, drank “veld tea for breakfast, lunch, and dinner”. Tea preparation was time-consuming: after collecting Rooibos, the preparer would chop it on a wooden block then sprinkle the leaves with water to rest under sticks overnight to bruise. The following morning, the leaves were spread out to dry, and in such a manner, the Rooibos would ferment, transforming from green to its characteristic red color. As the region opened up to White settlement, Dutch colonists began drinking Rooibos in lieu of more-expensive imported black teas. In the early twentieth century, a Russian immigrant to the

region was the first to export Rooibos, and in the 1930s, farmers expanded upon commercial interests by developing varieties suitable for agricultural cultivation (SARC 2012). While elder Wupperthal respondents remember harvesting and preparing Rooibos by hand for daily consumption, today this practice has disappeared and similarly to other South Africans Wupperthalers typically buy Rooibos from stores as a healthy alternative to black tea.

Emerging Rooibos Communities

Nearly all emerging Rooibos farmers fall within the ‘Coloured’ racial designation, but in reality ethnic heritage is quite mixed. In the southerly Elim communities, farmers share ancestral ties with the French Huguenots, and this heritage is evident in the prevalence of French names among residents of this area. In contrast to this, Dutch-based names are common in the Cederberg. More broadly, the Khoe-San traditionally resided in the region and one can find their artwork in a number of Wupperthal-based caves. While no one could tell me precisely how or when this population disappeared, one elderly woman remembers taking food to her Khoe-San neighbors as a child, and it is likely that Wupperthal’s mixed race population derives its ethnic roots from these people as well as from Whites and Cape Coloureds. According to oral tradition, White farmers resided in the area until the early 1800s when they abandoned their farms due to drought. At that time some of their Coloured servants remained behind to eke out their own homesteads.

In the 1830s, the Rhenish Missionary Society entered the region when the Reverend Johann Gottlieb Liepoldt founded Wupperthal (Red Cedar 2012). The mission grew and more White pastors came to reside in the area. Noting that graves from the Anglo-Boer wars dot the Wupperthal region, one elderly respondent told me that “the Church came to look after people

and to tell them to stop killing one another”. While Rhenish entry may have been pacifist in orientation, land ownership shifted from Coloured homesteaders to White Church-based control. In the 1960s, the Rhenish ceded its mission to the Moravian Church which continues to own the land, though today local Church leadership is Coloured. Some outstation members retain a sense of distrust toward Wupperthal Central because they feel that “all the resources have always gone to Wupperthal from the outstation”.



Figure 1.5: Emerging Rooibos Communities

Few emerging Rooibos farmers own land, and while Wupperthalers may rent plots from the Church for nominal fees, land is scarce. Yet despite this common concern, there are emerging class differences within the farming population. More successful producers hire seasonal labor to

assist with harvesting, and marginal farmers work for others while also harvesting their own plot. In the Nieuwoudtville region, Rooikastert cooperative producers communally work a plot of rented land. In contrast, some members of the Strandveld Cooperative hire Black and Coloured farmworkers from outside of their community. Men and women are active farmers in most of the emerging communities, and a few females have taken on cooperative leadership roles. However, the broader sector is marked by gender- and race-based inequalities: managerial positions are dominated by men and a few White commercial women. Finally, emerging groups tend to farm in the most isolated areas of the GCBC, where producers are constrained by inadequate infrastructure (Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010).

Despite structural inequalities, Rooibos offers much potential for emerging communities due to rapid market growth and the fact that the global supply is grown in this geographically contained region which the industry is striving to protect by pursuing Geographic Indicator (GI) status (Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). Recent studies have highlighted moderate emerging sector successes. In the mid-2000s, the Southern Bokkeveld-based Heiveld Cooperative and the Wupperthal Small Farmer Cooperative formed to take advantage of dual fairtrade and organic certification. To benefit from additional value-added market opportunities, these groups helped institute Fair Packers, a fairtrade processing facility jointly owned by farmer shareholders and a White business entrepreneur (Nel et al. 2007; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010).

My more recent fieldwork presents a less rosy picture and points to the need for further capacity building. The Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) has long supported Heiveld farmers, and reports suggest that they have successfully maintained certification and developed secure fairtrade buyer relations. The more remote Wupperthal Cooperative received less stable organizational assistance, and in 2009 lost both fairtrade and organic certification. Farmers

consequently fragmented into the Wupperthal Small Farmer Cooperative, which has since been liquidated due to claims of member non-payment, and the smaller Wupperthal Original Rooibos Cooperative, which recently regained dual certification and is busy developing infrastructure. In the midst of this upheaval, Fair Packers suffered extensive loss, and subsequently bought out its emerging shareholders to privatize operations. The issues occurring in the emerging Rooibos sector are not unique within fairtrade, and are generating concerns about the impact and efficacy of the movement as a developmental mechanism. Actors seeking to support emerging farmer participation must critically examine the ongoing challenges facing this group in order to locate effective points of intervention. This action research project therefore engaged farmers to generate knowledge and implement commodity networking.

The Action Research Team

Via support from USAID's Horticulture Collaborative Research Support Program (HortCRSP), I spent 2010 in South Africa collaborating with multiple stakeholder groups on a Rooibos action research project. The project's Principal Investigators included Center for Fair and Alternative Trade (CFAT) Co-Director, Laura T. Reynolds, and Andries du Toit, of South Africa's Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), housed at the University of the Western Cape. CFAT Co-Director Douglas Murray was also involved as project Co-Principal Investigator, as was Sandra Kruger, of Sandra Kruger and Associates (SKA), and myself. In addition to SKA and I, the primary project team included a group of 13 emerging Rooibos farmer leaders who were elected by their communities at project outset. These leaders actively informed all aspects of the project, and they operated as co-researchers during community

fieldwork. Broader project participants consisted of emerging farmers and various industry and organizational groups. Figure 1.6 shows the primary project team.⁵



Figure 1.6: The Project Team

Action Research Goal, Questions, and Objectives

The innovative partnership detailed above enabled me to design and implement a participatory commodity network research (PCNR) approach, the framework of which comprises a primary scholarly contribution. Indeed, the core project goal was to institute a holistic commodity networking approach in order to develop a more synthetic understanding of market-based social change within South Africa's emerging Rooibos tea sector. Given the action dimension of this project, it was necessary to integrate practitioner and academic efforts under the auspices of a singular, well-organized program. The synthetic strategy that I developed with

⁵ Some team members are not present in this photograph.

my project team involved farmer leadership elections followed by reflexive training, research, and networking activities.

I⁶ sought to answer seven key research questions. (1) What are the critical historical dimensions of this research arena? (2) Who are the commodity network actors involved in South Africa's emerging Rooibos sector and how are they engaging with the emerging producers involved in this project? (3) How are certification efforts impacting participating farmer livelihoods and involvement? (4) What are the democratic and bureaucratic processes occurring within this sector and how are producers navigating these? (5) What critical social dimensions are of relevance to producers, and how are these shaping their market-access and industry representation prospects? (6) What conditions, problems, and opportunities do producers face in terms of achieving commodity networking goals? (7) What capabilities do producers possess and where are the most likely points of intervention to strengthen involvement and expand benefits?

Unfortunately, I was unable to include farmer leaders in the process of developing the research questions as this had to be completed before the project began. However, I purposively maintained question breadth so that I could incorporate farmer leader insights during the research process, and I worked directly with the leaders determine the issues facing emerging Rooibos farmers. As we worked together, we distilled issues into a framework of conditions, problems, and opportunities for each research theme. This helped encourage problem solving as we were able to think of conditions as facts, and problems and opportunities as opinions about the conditions discussed. This conceptual strategy also proved fruitful during participatory data analysis exercises, in which we employed multiple theories of power to understand the information we had collected.

⁶ In this dissertation, I employ the term "I" when the work is my own and "we" when referring to concepts or actions that the broader action research team collectively developed.

More broadly the project team clarified interconnected goals and objectives in order to explore PCNR potential. SKA and I developed an initial framework at project inception, but our approach as well as division of labor evolved over time in response to farmer leader feedback.

Table 1.1: Research Project Goals and Objectives

Method	Academic	Practitioner
Goals	Engage PAR to problematize emerging farmer conditions, constraints, and opportunities	Develop farmer leadership via participatory market-access training and support
Objectives	<p>Examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical dimensions • Commodity network engagement with emerging farmers • Democratic, bureaucratic, and social dimensions including age, class, race, and gender • Impact of certification efforts <p>Determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural constraints and opportunities • Capabilities • Likely points of intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify emerging farmer capabilities and needs • Engage ToT program in conjunction with community workshops • Develop training materials and farmers’ guide to certification • Expand institutional capacity of Rooibos Council to provide an enabling environment • Evaluate outcomes • Develop recommendations • Integrate good practices

This research was programmatically challenging. While the promise of PAR lies in multidimensional training, negotiation, and consensus building, there is a risk for this approach to reflect broader structural inequalities. To mitigate this, we needed to ensure deeper levels of consensus building, and to achieve this, each team member had to play numerous roles and wear multiple conceptual caps (Kothari 2001; Mohan 2001). We sought to clarify division of labor and evolving objectives with one another as much as possible. Though we worked to integrate efforts, I focused on developing an effective political economy empowerment program while Sandra Kruger and Associates constructed market-access training and industry networking. The farmer leaders had multiple objectives, including community development, technical capacity

building, industry networking, conflict resolution, fundraising, and cooperative building. Our insights differed, but academic demands required us to develop a cohesive analytical lens to achieve breadth and depth. While it was difficult to ensure adequate attention to multifaceted and shifting details, our complementary strengths enabled us to form the PCNR model and develop lessons learned to help streamline future efforts.

Action Research Contributions

This project benefitted nearly all emerging Rooibos farmer communities via direct commodity network training and support. Emerging farmer estimates vary across industry reports (Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010) and are difficult to obtain for a variety of reasons, including shifting numbers, the remote location of many farmers, and ongoing political conflict. We initially approximated the existence of 353 emerging smallholder Rooibos farmers, with 295 residing in participating project communities (Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010) though a later census taken by farmer leaders during project midterm revealed 246 farmers in participating Wupperthal, Nieuwoudtville, and Elim communities. 13 farmer leaders, representing seven community groupings, successfully completed the Participatory Action Training-of-Trainers (PAToT) program⁷ and 203 community members attended our workshops. The project team ensured female involvement by maintaining a strong gender focus: six of the 13 farmer leaders are women, as were approximately half of the community workshop attendees. By combining active farmer-leader participation with in-depth community fieldwork and commodity

⁷ Of this number, 35 farmers comprise the Driefontein Small Farmers Primary Cooperative that joined the project at mid-term. Thus we were unable to include this group in all project activities and the two representatives that attended ToT sessions are not included in this number.

networking, we expanded awareness of the problems and prospects facing communities that are striving to align market access with development.

Findings from this research add to the robust literature on fair and alternative trade. Alternative market examinations are helping to clarify the struggle occurring within global trade networks as social justice and broader sustainability precepts come into conflict with traditional power relations. Some scholars have examined racial dimensions on hired-labor estates (du Toit et al. 2008; Kruger and du Toit 2007), but few studies have prioritized race within the context of smallholder participation, and even fewer examinations have attempted to integrate intersectional analysis within the macroscopic framework of commodity chain analysis (Shaw 2011). By conducting an intersectional examination of power at multiple levels of analysis, I fill a gap.

Most importantly, I have generated a participatory commodity networking research (PCNR) approach out of commodity network analysis, and this PCNR framework represents the project's primary contribution. PCNR integrates political economy perspectives with participatory development in order to deepen scholarly understanding of emerging farmer concerns while engaging social change from below. In part, the methodology is designed to engender producer empowerment from a collaborative examination of the power dimensions within a given commodity network. This dissertation details the approach via an in-depth analysis of action research findings that I collected in collaboration with the project team during 2010 fieldwork. Findings derive from participant observation and a series of interviews with emerging farmers, farmer leaders, organizational representatives, and industry operatives.

Chapter Two provides a conceptual overview of the PCNR framework, and Chapter Three draws from participant observation data to outline project application. Chapters Four, Five, and Six engage interview findings in order to illustrate Rooibos commodity networking

challenges and opportunities. More specifically, Chapter Four employs commodity network analysis to examine how organizational involvement is impacting emerging farmer participation and networking potential. Chapter Five situates emerging farmer concerns within the broader industry to discuss how Rooibos trends are affecting farmer livelihoods. In Chapter Six, I share findings from participating communities to delineate livelihood considerations and more holistically discuss quality of life. Drawing heavily from farmer-leader sociopolitical interviews and data analysis, I employ theories of power in Chapter Seven to clarify their perceptions of the democratic, bureaucratic, and stratification dimensions impacting Rooibos network functioning. Chapter Eight reviews insights and highlights lessons learned. In this final chapter, I argue the importance of instituting a participatory and relational approach to commodity network governance, and conclude by exploring how the PCNR framework may be employed within other product sectors to bolster industry support mechanisms and more broadly help all value chain actors more effectively meet multifaceted market demands and thereby capture the full potential of twenty-first century trade.

CHAPTER TWO: GROUNDING THEORIES TO SYNTHESIZE APPROACH

Introduction

Part of the difficulty with addressing producer issues within transnational commodity markets is the question of scale and the need for multiple units of analyses. Given the complexity of studying socioeconomic processes along the entirety of the geographic continuum, studies tend to privilege either global or local sites of examination. Scholars have long argued for an ‘ethnographic cosmopolitanism’ to better capture global-local multilateral linkages (Appadurai 1991). Recent work has attempted to clarify these interactions by situating local studies within the rubric of global value chains (Raynolds 2002a; Raynolds et al. 2004; Tsing 2005), and some African agro-food studies have combined labor measurements with value chain analysis (Barrientos and Smith 2007; Dolan 2004; Dolan 2007). Recently, scholars have conducted action research to better understand the challenges facing farm laborers operating in particular commodity sectors (Barrientos 2005; Bolwig et al. 2008; Nadvi and Barrientos 2004). However similar studies have not yet occurred in conjunction with small farmers, who face differing challenges and opportunities as independent actors. By engaging action research within the smallholder Rooibos commodity network, this study builds from recent examinations while filling a critical gap in agro-food action scholarship.

A primary issue with connecting local development assessment to global commodity studies lies in the question of approach. Investigators must examine the multiple groups operating within a given commodity network; thus producers tend to represent one interview or survey group among many. While producers are central to commodity network development,

inequitable functioning hinders their ability to equitably participate in the systems that govern their livelihoods (Mutersbaugh 2002; Mutersbaugh 2005; Reynolds 2009; Renard 2005; Shreck 2005). The scholarly community is not immune from perpetuating disadvantage. Value chain analyses tend to focus on the industrial end of the value chain, and when investigators do involve marginalized producers and farmworkers in research programs, inclusion is all too often superficial (Barrientos and Barrientos 2002).

Traditional research models “fundamentally involves issues of power” (Rossman and Rallis 1998: 66). These methods prioritize researcher control to ensure neutrality, but in practice, the notion of a wholly neutral investigator is an impossible ideal. Whether quantitative or qualitative, “all research is interpretive: guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (Denzin and Lincoln 2011: 13) Excluding producers from data collection and analysis does not ensure objectivity, but it does exacerbate structural inequalities, particularly within the development arena where top-down approaches tend to be implemented in a paternalistic manner. At its worst, data collection is an extractive process whereby outside experts glean information from communities that lack access to the resulting analysis and discourse. By not involving participants in the research process, investigators miss a critical opportunity for multi-investigator triangulation, and run the risk of misinterpreting findings in ways that reify stereotypical views (Berg 2004; Marshall and Rossman 2011). This not only harms participants and their communities, but the veracity of the reported data is questionable.

Development investigators may simultaneously redress research ethics and improve data validity by expanding research participation to research stakeholders (Marshall and Rossman 2011; Selener 1997). Mixed-methods strategies help investigators capitalize on the strengths of

qualitative and quantitative approaches, and when well-managed, investigators can triangulate data in this way. The notion of participation has become popularized within development circles, and some scholars are using participatory action research (PAR) to involve stakeholders in the research process, establish an atmosphere of co-learning, and promote collective social change (MacIntyre 2008). However, these types of projects tend to be highly qualitative and localized.

To develop empowerment strategies within broader frameworks, action researchers must link local participatory interventions “to wider, and more difficult, processes of democratization” (Mohan 2001: 166). This project sought to democratize emerging farmer participation within the Rooibos commodity network by integrating multiple complementary approaches to institute a flexible and participatory framework for engagement. This enabled us to connect multilateral points of examination across geographic space, and with various social groups. During fieldwork, we used a simple analytical framework—examining emerging Rooibos farmer conditions, problems, and opportunities—to facilitate involvement in data collection and analysis. Collaborative action helped us verify findings and explore next-step opportunities.

This project engaged an integrated conceptual framework that included commodity network analysis, theories of power, participatory action research (PAR), and participatory action training-of-trainers (PAToT). These theories and methodologies informed project action, and we ensured sociocultural relevancy via reflexive action; thus conceptual synthesis derived from project team interaction. Sampling for difference rather than sameness enables researchers to garner more complete data (Stinchcombe 2005). To prevent sociopolitical bias, we put this premise into conceptual effect by incorporating diverse theories of power. The participatory commodity network research (PCNR) model may therefore be viewed as a flexible and multifaceted conceptual toolbox designed for reflexive application with producer communities

operating in diverse commodity networks and other social arenas; and this approach may inform multilateral policy research and engaged scholarship forums, where groups are actively employing action research to improve project action and assessment (Cooper 2011; PLAAS 2011). Table 2.1 outlines the ideal and material purposes of each conceptual component.

Table 2.1: Conceptual Toolbox

Theory	Components	Ideal Purpose	Material Purpose
	Commodity Network Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link multiple units of analysis and capture multilateral linkages from within a unifying framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore commodity sector socioeconomic conditions, problems, and opportunities
	Theories of Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate multifaceted sociopolitical analysis into commodity sector studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncover sociopolitical conditions, problems, and opportunities
	Human Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand socioeconomic indicators for a more holistic understanding of wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine producer resources, capabilities, and training needs
	PAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equally involve all primary stakeholders in praxis as co-investigators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve stakeholder research and networking involvement
	PAToT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure learner-centered and performance-based training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build knowledge and skills and assess learner impact

Commodity Network Analysis

Commodity network analysis offers overarching analytical cohesion as it allows the researcher to capture local-global linkages from within the unifying context of a particular product chain (Raynolds 2002a). Due to the processes of economic globalization, goods increasingly traverse local, national, regional, and global scales. To examine this phenomenon, world systems theorists first conceptualized commodity chains, defining them as “a network of

labor and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity” (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986: 159). Gereffi later developed global commodity chain studies, which distinguished between producer- and buyer-driven chains with a multifaceted focus on input-output structures, governance systems, and institutional frameworks (Gereffi 1994). This distinction has been critical in terms of understanding the shift from Fordist to post-Fordist trade processes as buyer-driven chains dictate global production and consumption patterns. Tallontire and colleagues note that “in a buyer-driven value chain, large retailers or brand-name companies make the key decisions...without actually owning any manufacturing facilities” (Tallontire et al. 2005: 560). The impetus toward buyer-driven chains has limited production market control as decision-making authority has shifted to large-scale buyers who tend to purchase commodities produced by large plantations or through contract farming arrangements with small scale producers (McMichael 2006; Raynolds 2002b).

In recent years, Gereffi has replaced the term *commodity* chain with *value* chain in an effort to stimulate more comprehensive analysis (Gereffi et al. 2001). Scholars argue that this approach enables an exploration of globally coordinated activities within particular commodities via a focus on hierarchical relationships (Gibbon and Ponte 2005). However, recent studies have ignored critical power dimensions in favor of simply mapping the actors involved in given product sectors. While standard value chain analysis is an excellent tool for examining industrial trading processes, critics state that it cannot effectively capture alternative movements and the roles quality, nature, and social justice play in trade discourse (Murdoch et al. 2000). Indeed the concept of quality is a central power source for groups attempting to maximize competitiveness (Gereffi et al. 2005). Scholars have thus generated a commodity network approach by

incorporating key concepts from convention theory, actor-network analysis, and cultural studies to examine how political action shapes commodity engagement (Raynolds 2002a).

Both the actor network approach and convention theory maintain a relational rather than constituted understanding of global networks. Actor network analysis focuses on the ways in which actors maintain networks across space and time through performative orderings and discursive engagement. In terms of commodity chains, convention theory examines “how actors materially and ideologically engage in particular norms, rules, and quality constructions across production, distribution, and consumption arenas” (Raynolds 2002a: 409). In other words, product competitiveness is determined by multiple quality considerations constructed over time and space through socioeconomic processes (Salais and Thévenot 1986; Thévenot 1995).

Thévenot (1995) categorizes product quality with reference to *worlds* of convention operating under differing moral philosophies. These worlds are complex but scholars primarily use four to study alternative trade processes: (1) market conventions prioritize price; (2) industrial conventions value systematized production standards; (3) domestic conventions include loyalty, trust, and dignity; and (4) civic conventions promote welfare and representation. Whereas mainstream traders generally stress market and industrial values, fair traders promote domestic and civic conventions as alternative quality norms (Gibbon and Ponte 2005; Ponte 2007; Raynolds 2002a; Smith and Barrientos 2005). Markets thus take varied shapes: industrial markets prioritize industrial and market conventions whereas fair trade and broader fair market initiatives promote domestic and civic norms that prioritize dignified and trustworthy trade relations and fair labor practices. Within fair markets, producer groups essentially use quality conventions to add value to products, and this form of commodity upgrading may help them make ‘a better deal’ (Ponte and Ewert 2009).

Finally, cultural studies contributions provide greater insight into commodity analysis as they demonstrate how “commodities have mutually constituted symbolic and material values” that inform product discourse (Appadurai 1986 as quoted in Reynolds 2002a: 407). Indeed, some scholars are concerned that certified markets may merely fetishize producer groups by reconstituting and packaging producer culture in stereotypical ways (Fridell 2007a). With these considerations in mind, the project team envisioned PCNR by analyzing how multifaceted network processes are affecting emerging Rooibos farmer involvement.

Theories of Power

Due to its focus on political engagement, bureaucratic, democratic, and stratification considerations are embedded within the commodity network approach but these have not been formally delineated within the tradition to empirically examine how political processes affect participation. To address this gap, the PCNR model employs the notion of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005) to formally incorporate the analytical strengths of complementary theories of power. These include pluralism, managerialism, and the class perspective—or more broadly the critical domain—to include additional stratification dimensions. Political economy scholars have generally employed theories of power to problematize the theoretical role of the state and examine globalization processes, but the perspectives remain epistemologically incompatible as they derive from the differing analyses of industrialization provided by classical sociologists Durkheim, Weber, and Marx (Alford and Friedland 1985). Thus I pursued methodological rather than epistemological integration via a grounded theory approach.

The pluralist worldview prioritizes questions concerning social stability and human agency, focusing on the role of the state in maintaining institutions as well as the processes that inform civic engagement. As such, this tradition demonstrates strengths in examining democratic organization. Pluralist scholars understand change as an incremental process whereby various social groups influence political decisions by forming interest groups to achieve representation. These argue that underrepresented groups should work within the system to gain greater levels of political access and achieve desired social change. Indeed, rapid transformations upset social equilibrium and are inadvisable (Alford and Friedland 1985).

In globalization debates, pluralist scholars argue that the anti-globalization discourse is defeatist because it reinforces social divisions and assumes away any meaningful opportunity for social change which they note can and does occur. Pluralists examine how market-based strategies achieve global economic reform, arguing for example that international advocacy campaigns generate consumer demand for ethically sustainable production. The rapid growth of conscious consumerism may be engendering a form of global political pluralism as interest groups unite to harness spending power in order to transform corporate practices (Yeates 2002). Commodity networks operate via relational power dynamics and political processes, and Rooibos networks tend to rely upon democratic mechanisms in formal decision-making. Thus the project team operationalized this perspective by examining democratic conditions, problems and opportunities within the emerging Rooibos network.

Managerialists understand states within the context of bureaucracies which increasingly extend control over subject populations, and this perspective is suitable for examining organizational considerations (Alford and Friedland 1985). In commodity chain studies, managerialists focus on organizational elites and bureaucratic systems to determine how these

may be structuring decision-making. Here, scholars note that the processes of globalization have engendered a world order whereby “central functions are disproportionately concentrated in the national territories of the highly developed countries” (Sassen 2000: 53). Strong states govern and direct neoliberal globalization to maintain a competitive edge within global markets, and by so doing, diminish the capacity of weak states to regulate their own economies (Weiss 1998). In fairtrade networks, producers and local organizational actors are ultimately regulated by Europe-based FLO. Moreover, South African industry actors must increasingly meet strict national standards set by the post-Apartheid government. Given the important role of bureaucracy in commodity networks, the project team used this approach to examine how multilateral governance systems are impacting producer involvement and market-access.

The class perspective focuses on the collusion of the state with capitalism as a means of exploiting labor to fuel economic growth (Alford and Friedland 1985). Within this domain, scholars may recognize pluralist insights by noting how counterhegemonic efforts can serve as a mechanism for shifting power to disprivileged local groups (Evans 2005). However, critical scholars also argue that such initiatives have yet to reshape global trading relations, noting how mainstream markets tend to coopt and neutralize counterhegemonic efforts (Fridell 2007a; Mutersbaugh 2005; Renard 2005). In the late twentieth century, critical race and feminist scholars developed intersectionality theory to materially examine complex and interconnecting dimensions of social inequality (Cotter et al. 1999; Crenshaw 1989; Hill Collins 1990; McCall 2005). Intersectionality is ultimately a multidimensional analytical approach which subsumes class within the broader context of stratification. By using an intersectional class-critical approach, we may examine multifaceted and intersecting inequalities. As such, the project team

determined social groupings critical to the emerging Rooibos sector then examined how unequal relations impacted the ability of different producer groups to achieve market and network access.

The project team dialogued on various social dimensions and chose to incorporate class, gender, age, and race perspectives into data analysis, and to further interconnect these to the democratic and bureaucratic considerations uncovered in our pluralist and managerialist examinations. In terms of gender, numerous scholars have demonstrated the importance of women to economic development, and globalization has brought this issue to the forefront as transnational trading systems are transforming local gender relations throughout the world (Benería 2003; Boserup 2007; Lucas 2007; Okojie 1996). Critical scholars examine how global trade practices are reshaping local agrarian involvement, and note that transformations often engender gender-based conflict over household resource and labor allocation (Barrientos et al. 2003; Carney and Watts 1990; Ramamurthy 2000; Reynolds 2002b). The project team thus explored how local gender relations are impacting allocations as well as democratic and bureaucratic engagement.

The interplay between multicultural and critical race discourse shapes race debates in South Africa as well as globally. Multiculturalism is pluralist in scope as it prioritizes social cohesion by seeking democratic inclusivity and reconciliation. Critical race standpoints derive from conflict analyses and highlight the systemic nature of racial power. For example, critical globalization scholars argue that mainstream discourse does not adequately address the question of globalized racial stratification, or what some call a system of global apartheid (Crenshaw et al. 1995). While intersectionality historically derives from critical race scholarship (Crenshaw 1989) this approach encourages fluid analysis and is methodologically complementary if one is sampling for conceptual difference. Thus we employed both multicultural and critical race

perspectives to problematize this topic in relation to Rooibos network functioning so as to minimize the potential for theoretical bias to misrepresent findings.

Finally, globalization literature has not prioritized the question of age, though recent cultural studies have incorporated Mannheim's concept of historical regeneration to examine the social positions of African youth and explore shifting generational dynamics within the context of globalization (Cole and Durham 2006; Reynolds Whyte et al. 2008). African educational perspectives provide further insight into the generational dynamics of rural African populations, highlighting the important role that elders play in transferring local knowledge and maintaining social order (Reagan 2000; Rwomire 1998). Given the importance of age relations within emerging Rooibos communities, the project team incorporated this social grouping.

Despite the growing sophistication of sociopolitical discourse and implicit inclusion of multiple perspectives in analyses, scholars have largely continued to treat theories of power as incompatible meta-theories. Despite calls for integration (Alford and Friedland 1985), epistemological fracture limits the ability of researchers to directly examine and communicate the multifaceted processes of social continuity and social change, and thereby extrapolate strategies for cohesive social change. Intersectionality scholarship has further complicated synthetic potential by incorporating additional critical dimensions, but it provided this research with a methodological solution. My purpose was to pragmatically link theories of power to commodity networks; thus I used the concept of intersectionality to conceptually integrate sociopolitical examination.

The unifying framework of commodity network analysis allowed me to empirically examine how multiple power dimensions are influencing Rooibos network engagement, discourse, and quality construction, with particular focus on emerging farmer participation

constraints and opportunities. To guide participatory examination, I incorporated key insights from each sociopolitical perspective into farmer-leader training, sociopolitical interviews, and data analysis, and the process of integration proved to be straightforward and highly illuminating. By treating theories of power as mere conceptual tools, rather than as incompatible worldviews, the farmer leaders and I were able to achieve more holistic understanding of the multifaceted sociopolitical dimensions impacting the emerging Rooibos sector. Indeed, methodological synthesis must drive conceptual integration because power manifests differentially across social settings due to micro-political considerations, organizational forms, and sociocultural norms and values (Kothari 2001). When analyzing data, researchers should determine the appropriate perspectives then problematize the relative explanatory power of each via empirical examination. Whereas Figure 2.1 conceptually illustrates the strategy of sampling for theoretical difference, note that research findings necessarily determine the importance of each perspective, thus this diagram is an ideal type. In reality, the size of each pie slice—or the relevance of each component—will vary across research programs.

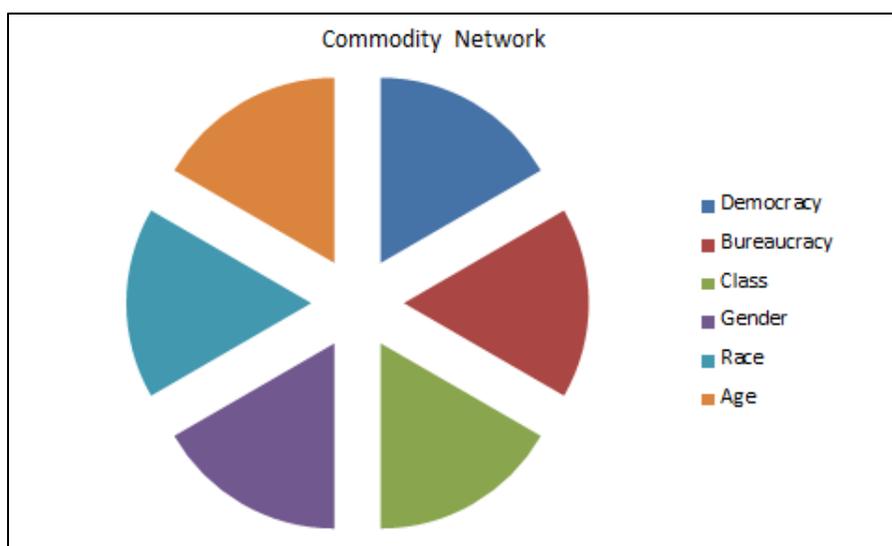


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Intersectionality: Theoretical Sampling for Difference

Human Capabilities Approach

Commodity network analysis and sociopolitical approaches help frame engagement, but these are theoretical perspectives traditionally designed to explain findings rather than to generate them. To flesh out project process, the project team incorporated a number of complementary methodological strategies, including the human capabilities approach. Recent initiatives have engaged the notion of human capabilities within hired-labor examinations (Barrientos 2005; Nadvi and Barrientos 2004), and we built from these efforts to examine capabilities within the smallholder sector. Our goal was to holistically capture emerging Rooibos farmer functioning and determine their quality of life. This chapter details how we established a collaborative action research process in order to determine capabilities and build capacity.

The capabilities approach derives from Rawlesian resource ethics, and more broadly from the critical pluralist discourse occurring within development scholarship (Peet 1999). For critical pluralists, political spirit must be coupled with procedural action. John Dewey expresses this sentiment well when he states that “democratic ends demand democratic methods” (Dewey 1939: 175). As democratic action requires access to resources, Rawlesian themes remain important in terms of problematizing democratization. Rawles’ list of ‘primary goods’ offers quality-of-life indicators that extend beyond income to more broadly capture a sense of human liberty. These include: (1) freedom of thought and liberty of conscience, (2) political liberties and freedom of association, (3) liberty and integrity of the person, (4) rights and liberties covered by the rule of law, (5) freedom of movement, and (6) free choice of occupation.

These basic liberties are essential for producing a lively population of confident and productive citizens, but the approach is weak in that it only captures actual functions rather than capabilities for change. Rawles’ emphasis on basic liberties provides us with excellent quality-

of-life benchmarks, but the broader framework ignores the degree by which individuals vary in terms of resource privileges and deprivation. Ultimately, the resource approach cannot diagnose obstacles to adequate dispersion of goods. While this framework may illuminate social inequalities, it also reinforces them because it assumes a normative universality predicated upon the sociocultural habits of the privileged, and it obscures the daily realities of the world's poor and disenfranchised.

In response to these critiques, Nussbaum and Sen (1993) have pioneered the human capabilities approach, albeit in different ways (Robeyns 2005). As an economist, Sen (1985; 1999; 2004) examines the role of capabilities in demarcating the spaces in which investigators generate quality-of-life assessments. He argues that social factors—such as gender or race—can constrain an individual's capabilities and/or entitlements. Thus Sen wishes to expand poverty measures and enable empowerment by capturing human functioning. For Sen, capabilities lists (primary goods) should be developed in conjunction with local actors to ensure sociocultural relevance (Alkire 2002). In contrast, Nussbaum (2000; 2002; 2003) has developed a broad list of universal capabilities for inclusion in political constitutions. In this sense, her approach is broader, but it is also reflexive, allowing for dialogue and conceptual evolution. Influenced by Aristotlean and Marxian theories, Nussbaum argues that one must move away from abstract theorizing to examine the daily reality of people's lives.

The project team incorporated elements of both of their approaches, using Nussbaum's list to develop capabilities workshop strategies and interview questions, but ensuring culturally situated evaluation by using the notion of capabilities to inform the process of participatory needs assessment. Preliminary capabilities workshops helped the team assess and prioritize the multifaceted conditions, problems, and opportunities facing emerging Rooibos farmers. We then

developed baseline indicators to measure producer capabilities and deprivation, and this informed our monitoring and evaluation plan as well as socioeconomic interviews (Nussbaum 2000; Sen 1985; Sen 1999). Ultimately our approach became one of participatory capabilities and resource mapping.

Table 2.2: Nussbaum’s Central Capabilities List

Theory	Basic Capabilities	Measurement
	Life	Life expectancy
	Bodily Health	Reproduction; nourishment; shelter
	Bodily Integrity	Free movement; sovereign bodily boundaries; secure against assault/domestic violence; opportunities for sexual satisfaction
	Senses	Imagination and thought; literacy, math, and science; ability to create self-expressive works; freedom of political and artistic expression and religious exercise
	Emotions	Ability to have attachments to things and people; free from overwhelming fear and anxiety
	Practical Reason	Critical reflection about planning one’s life
	Affiliation	Social interaction; freedom of assembly and political speech; self-respect; protection against discrimination; ability to enter into meaningful work relationships
	Other Species	Ability to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and nature
	Play	Ability to play, laugh, and enjoy recreational activities
	Control	Ability to participate in the political choices that govern one’s life; free speech and associations; ability to hold property; freedom to seek employment on equal basis with others; freedom from unwarranted search and seizure

Source: (Nussbaum 2003)

Table 2.2 details Nussbaum’s list of capabilities. We drew from this when developing capabilities workshop exercises and baseline indicators. This strategy helped us to first problematize stakeholder concerns then later analyze data. Nussbaum further offers a simple

typology, which likewise proved useful in post-project data analysis; thus I revisit this list again during my Chapter Six community discussion.

The notion of functioning is critical within the human capabilities approach. Functioning consists of the things one actually does and experiences. These vary from the elementary—such as being adequately nourished and free from avoidable disease—to complex activities or personal states, including taking part in the life of the community and having self-respect. Sen uses the notion of functioning to measure whether people are empowered enough to participate in the systems that impact their lives. Individual and group functioning illuminates whether or not people have the ability to choose a life that is valued (Sen 1999). One may understand poverty as a deprivation of capabilities rather than a mere function of income. This conceptualization illuminates the entrenched nature of poverty because capabilities deprivation implies lack of empowerment capacity. The approach also subtly challenges the assumptions underlying existing power relations. By employing this awareness of poverty, investigators may make visible the rich capabilities of marginalized groups and uncover capability deprivations among privileged actors. This flexibility opens scope for more equitable information exchange in participatory projects, where all groups have something of value to teach as well as to learn.

Finally, the learning approach to impact assessment combines value chain mapping with the capabilities approach by engaging with informal workers (Barrientos 2005; Nadvi and Barrientos 2004). Traditional poverty assessments tend to measure actual outcomes rather than capabilities. The learning approach incorporates the notion of capabilities assessment within value chain poverty nodes, where specific groups are located who are vulnerable to poverty or likely to be in poverty. By using this notion of network nodes and clusters, the learning approach generates the information necessary for determining capabilities and developing an action

strategy for poverty alleviation. This approach disaggregates between different worker categories, as well as on the basis of gender, race, and religion, enabling researchers to identify specific workers who are likely to be poor, and to work intensively with these groups (Nadvi and Barrientos 2004).

By examining capabilities, investigators may assess the efficacy of ethical and fair labor codes, thus contributing to the pursuit of social sustainability. The learning approach is participatory—as well as analytical—in that action derives from a team of deeply committed stakeholders, practitioners, and scholars. Similarly to our approach, it calls for collaborative data triangulation and the active participation of producer groups in the research process, recognizing that sustained learning requires space for reflection as well as ongoing learning opportunities. Only through direct engagement may social change operatives generate a learning loop that incorporates organizational feedback to inform code implementation and management (Barrientos 2005).

As I discuss in Chapter Three, we incorporated a number of community training exercises to gain participation and generate more in-depth knowledge of emerging Rooibos concerns. We found that this strategy stimulated insightful information exchange during subsequent PAR and PAToT activities. Nussbaum's list helped me formally delineate the more ephemeral qualities of emerging Rooibos communities during fieldwork. Table 2.3 summarizes the primary tenets outlined in this section to share how we integrated past efforts to develop a capabilities-based action research and training agenda. While we did not formally and systematically incorporate every element listed below into our ongoing investigation, the approach offers an overarching framework for investigation, and initial framing enabled us to uncover the resource and capabilities needs deemed most important by the participating communities.

Table 2.3: Resource and Capabilities Learning Approach

Method	Capabilities	Learning	Resource	PCNR Addition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life • Bodily Health • Bodily Integrity • Senses • Emotions • Practical Reason • Affiliation • Other species • Play • Environmental control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized • Poverty nodes • Intersectionality • Capabilities • Value-chain • Impact assessment • Collaborative investigation • Learning loop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of thought • Conscious liberty • Political liberties • Freedom of association • Personal integrity • Legal rights/liberties • Freedom of movement • Free choice of occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community resource mapping • SWOT-V analysis • Ranking and addition of potential topics
Synthesis	Integrate capabilities indicators with learning approach and workshop exercises to determine training and resource needs and develop democratic leadership			

Participatory Action Research

PAR is a dynamic and fast growing field of inquiry. It derives out of multiple disciplines and epistemological traditions to challenge the neutrality claims that have long dominated social science discourse. The field draws heavily from feminist contributions in order to transcend binary notions of power, and PAR specialists have developed an awareness of intersectionality to more fully delineate and address the multifaceted inequalities impacting the action research arena (Lykes and Coquillon 2007; Marshall and Rossman 2011; Mohan 2001). By integrating participatory precepts into all project activities, our team was able to unite on common goals, and develop a cohesive action research and training agenda. This section broadly explains the strategy then briefly outlines specific PAR traditions, concluding with a discussion on project application that I expand upon in Chapter Three.

The drawings in Figure 2.2 represent PAR's reflexive methodology. Predicated upon a cyclical principle of reflection and action, praxis requires a great deal of tolerance and flexibility (Kothari 2001; Selener 1997).

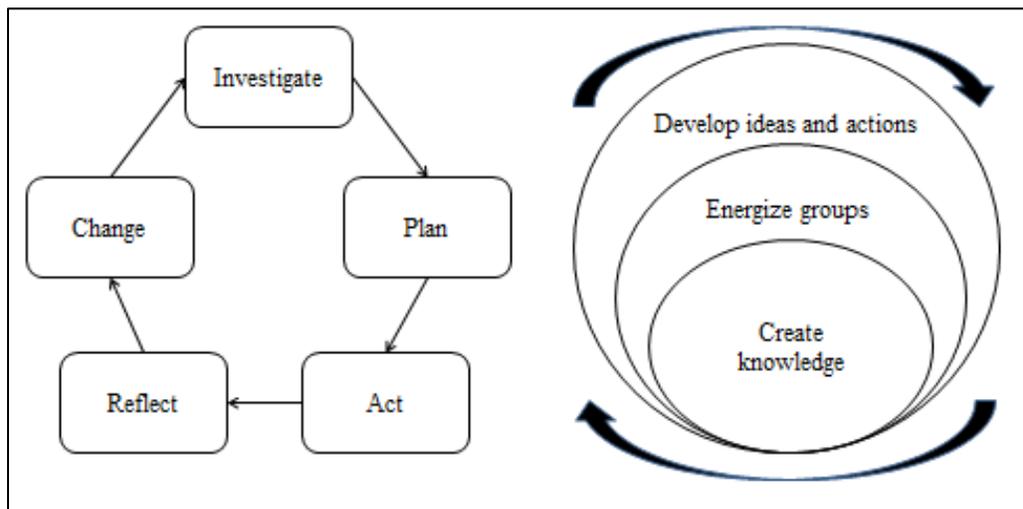


Figure 2.2: Participatory Action Research Process

Source: (Kruger 2011) and Author

PAR shares epistemological roots with alternative development paradigms, including the human capabilities approach, and with social justice movements such as fair trade, which maintains procedural norms that demand dialogue, transparency, and respect (FINE 2003). At its best, PAR emphasizes a co-learning process that establishes collaborative information sharing to ensure the full inclusion from initial project planning to final reflection. Yet complete implementation is difficult, and participatory approaches are vulnerable to dominant group cooptation. At its worst, PAR becomes a tool for maintaining the status quo, though this is likely unconscious, and therefore an inadvertent outcome of well-intended interventions (Hayward et al. 2004; Kothari 2001; MacIntyre 2008; McTaggart 1997; Mohan 2001).

PAR practitioners must commit to ongoing critical self-reflection in order to prevent structural power relations from marring the emancipatory potential of this approach. Thus the practice of PAR can be uncomfortably destabilizing as well as liberating. Because the approach prioritizes equal involvement, it “raises serious questions about the relationships between expert and non-expert, how we define ‘decision-makers’, and the ways in which the world is represented to different groups” (Mohan 2001: 158). All people descend from centuries of colonial conquest and we currently reside in an era of rapid globalization characterized by growing inequalities. In other words, even when individuals are sensitive to gender, race, and other social justice concerns, history undergirds our thoughts about others and our interpersonal relationships with one another (Said 1979). Dominant group bias can subtly dictate projects, but practitioners can consciously work to ameliorate such difficulties by investing in democracy-building exercises and multidirectional communication. Thus, the participatory action process may be understood as a form of symbolic interactionism, in which participants agree to interact with one another in order to transcend deeply engrained assumptions and transform social meanings. While PAR relations are loosely structured by core guiding principles, interactions should not be so constrained as to lose spontaneity. Investigators should adapt lessons learned to frame future efforts, but with the recognition that every project will generate its own life as participants engage with one another in expected and unexpected ways (MacIntyre 2008).

Daniel Selener notes four major PAR schools of thought. He classifies these as (1) participatory research in community development, (2) action research in organizations, (3) action research in schools, and (4) farmer participatory research (Selener 1997). There is significant overlap between these schools in terms of strategies, but differing intellectual roots lend each a unique flavor. First, the Latin American-based community development approach engages an

empowerment framework based on critical consciousness and liberation theology. In short, it represents “a community organizing and problem solving tool” designed to transform local power relations (Selener 1997: 8). Second, action research in organizations is essentially a managerial learning tool. Here, researchers and clients collaborate to learn about particular social systems with the intention of actively changing them. Primary goals are to maximize organizational efficiency while instituting consensus-based decision making. Third, action research in schools was developed in the 1920s to ensure participation in research programs that are designed to assess and improve educational practices. Fourth, farmer participatory research prioritizes technological knowledge building. This approach has grown out of rural development efforts to transform the top-down technology transfer approaches prevalent in agricultural extension work. It recognizes the relevance of indigenous knowledge and requires researchers to include farmers in technological innovation to link local skill with scientific process.

Finally, Chambers (1983; 1994) has developed the closely related field of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) to align participatory approaches with rapid rural appraisal techniques. PRA has enjoyed a great deal of popularity within such mainstream development circles as the World Bank and United Nations (FAO 1999; Francis 2001). It prioritizes collaborative workshops where practitioners engage training mechanisms, including community resource mapping, ranking matrices, Venn diagrams, and fiscal management exercises. For this project we modified a number of PRA exercises and integrated them into capabilities workshops in order to gain insight into farmer resource training capabilities and needs. PRA shares similar strengths and weaknesses with other PAR approaches. While the concept of collective knowledge generation is visionary, the bureaucratization of these processes can diminish the emancipatory power of participatory efforts (Chambers 1994). Managerial challenges include “‘faddism’

(doing it because it is fashionable); rushing; formalism (following the letter but not the spirit); one-offs (doing it once); [participation] by command (doing it because the boss ordered it); and routinization and ruts” (Chambers 1994 as quoted in Francis 2001: 87).

The project team integrated components from each of the above schools of thought, though our synthesis was by no means systematic or even fully conceptualized at the time. Rather, we possessed theoretical understanding of PAR as well as field experience, and our evolving involvement enabled us to realize the complexity of farmer concerns. We strove to transform problems into opportunities via active dialogue with one another, as well as with a diverse group of more loosely involved industry and organizational agents. This process was messy, and at times problematic, but we found that greater inclusivity stimulated innovative thinking and problem solving, allowing us to clarify interconnected goals, as well as to identify future opportunities for deeper engagement. Following the advice of other recent efforts to link development assessments with action research, we began with examinations of Rooibos value chain governance then worked with emerging Rooibos farmers and farmer leaders to specifically detail the emerging value chain structure. Via interrelated research and training components, we identified potential action points, determined and assessed product upgrading potential, then developed participatory training and action on the issues identified as most critical (Bolwig et al. 2008). As the project evolved, our team came to understand PAR and PAToT as cyclical participatory information sharing (PIE) and action planning (PAP) strategies that comprise a broader commodity networking process for producer support.

To conclude, PAR’s reflexivity makes it ideal for commodity network investigations, where researchers tend to operate in turbulent environments marked by competition and inequality. At heart, participatory strategies are guides for project democratization, but these

strategies must be well thought out, and facilitators must be responsive to concerns as well as flexible to change. Power differentials persist within the most participatory of arenas, and superficial participation can only deepen exploitation, engendering anger, mistrust, and research fatigue. PAR projects require multidirectional information sharing, but developing and maintaining open communication channels takes time and everyone must make an effort; thus all members of the project team are essential (Cornwall and Pratt 2011; Fox 2006; Kothari 2001; Marshall and Rossman 2011; Selener 1997; Wolf 1996). In the following section and more deeply in Chapter Three, I discuss how we linked PAR to a PAToT program that included bringing the Rooibos network to farmer leaders and farmer leaders to the network. This required good management and incurred added expense, but by so doing, we were able to maximize the benefits of direct interaction, multidirectional information sharing, and network professionalism.

Participatory Action Training of Trainers

While training-of-trainers is a well-known term within international development circles, I employ the acronym PAToT to conceptually describe the participatory nature of project training. Essentially, PAToT is an amalgamation of three methodological approaches that the project team reflexively integrated during project planning and delivery: (1) PAR, (2) ToT, and (3) Outcomes-based Education (OBE). Our primary goal was to incorporate participatory action precepts into a farmer leadership training program, but we actualized this process in accordance with our existing skillsets. My expertise lies in ToT, whereas Sandra Kruger and Associates specializes in OBE-based training and leadership building. Together, we generated a PAToT program that incorporates OBE methods to measure performance and ensure goal completion.

In South Africa, the education sector has instituted OBE in an effort to transform the top-down educational approaches of the Apartheid era into a more participatory educational model. OBE seeks to deinstitutionalize the educational process by instituting learner-centered protocols and by aligning teaching objectives with pragmatic skill-building. OBE prioritizes performance-based training and active learner assessment but its efficacy is contested, particularly within the formal education sector where there is resistance to the approach, as well as messy and uninformed application. Bureaucratized forms of OBE may be pedagogically rigid and its dogmatic focus on measurable outcomes may actually hinder the learning process. Yet when implemented in a more fluid manner, OBE can be transformational (Au and Kwan 2009; Malan 2000). The approach is conceptually compatible with non-formal and adult education strategies that prioritize experiential learning and group collaboration (Foley 2004), and we found that OBE suited the flexible nature of PAR since OBE derives from broader experiential learning approaches that view knowledge attainment as a reflexive process as seen in Figure 2.3.

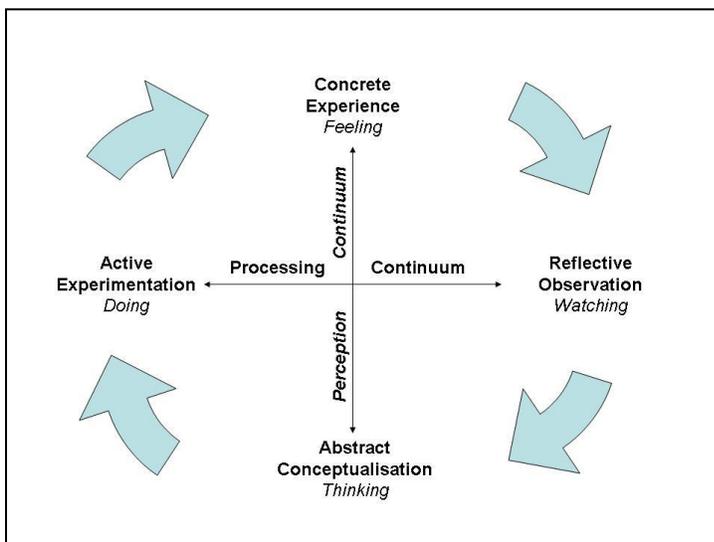


Figure 2.3: Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning

Source: (Clark 2010)

The experiential education literature stresses the importance of incorporating multiple activities into the learning cycle, including reading, writing, problem-solving, and active experimentation. By meeting the needs of different learners, this approach values the diverse strengths that different individuals bring to the educational process (Fielding 1994; Kolb and Kolb 2005; Kolb 1984). In particular, OBE encourages learners to achieve outcomes according to ability via awareness of the learning process, and in the collaborative context, facilitators and learners comprise teams working toward specific performance goals. To enable farmer leaders to maximize their capabilities, we incorporated Kolb's experiential learning cycle into the training material and actively discussed learning strategies. To conclude, OBE offers the structure necessary for learner assessment, and this is critical within the development arena where projects must demonstrate measurable impact. Multidirectional training-learner assessments played a critical role in PAToT monitoring and evaluation. As I discuss in Chapter Three, our desire to integrate PAR with training helped us develop an interconnected learning matrix of classroom sessions, fieldwork training, and commodity networking. I have conceptually separated PAR and PAToT for the sake of clarity, and because our project team developed an approximate division of labor upon these lines; however PAR in practice became but one component of PAToT, or vice-versa.

Synthesis

Via direct collaboration, the project team helped me to design and refine the PCNR approach to improve producer support and stimulate commodity networking. In problematizing the approach, we found it necessary to integrate multiple conceptual components in order to streamline efforts and meet project demands. Theoretically, we synthesized commodity network

analysis with sociopolitical theories to study democracy, bureaucracy, and stratification within the emerging Rooibos network. Methodologically, we operationalized the human capabilities approach in conjunction with PAR to determine capabilities and resource needs, informing PIE and PAP networking. To generate knowledge and ensure goal achievement, we developed PAToT by linking performance-based leadership training with participatory action. These conceptual tools are diverse but complementary, and synthesis evolved from a process of reflexive application and pragmatic adaptation.

At the start of this chapter, I provided Table 2.1 in order to clarify the ideal and material purposes of PCNR components. Table 2.4 offers a more in-depth procedural outline to inform future action. While PAR projects cannot and should not be replicated, flexible frameworks can clarify pursuits and minimize complications. It is important to remember that the components listed below represent conceptual tools for methodological application: core themes guide action, but the model is adaptable in that substantive components may be added, deleted, or adapted to suit diverse project themes, cultural contexts, and requirements. For example, we did not incorporate a socio-environmental framework in our investigation, though we informally engaged environmental issues in both training and research. Sustainability experts may formally include these in their own project cycles.

Table 2.4: Participatory Commodity Network Research Model

Method	REFLECT	ACT	REFLECT	ACT
	Theoretical Components <i>(holistic framing)</i>	Method Framework <i>(procedural guidance)</i>	First-level Synthesis <i>(restructuring)</i>	Second-level Synthesis <i>(positioning)</i>
	1. Socioeconomic framing	3. Conceptual framing	5. Socioeconomic	7. Sociopolitical change
	Commodity network analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value chain studies • Convention theory • Actor-network theory • Cultural studies 	Human capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource and capabilities learning approach PAR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory data collection & analysis • Research ethics PAToT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory training • Learner assessment 	Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions • Problems • Opportunities Commodity network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions • Problems • Opportunities 	Pluralist solutions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • democratic problems • bureaucratic problems • critical problems Managerialist solutions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • democratic problems • bureaucratic problems • critical problems Critical solutions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • democratic problems • bureaucratic problems • critical problems
	2. Sociopolitical framing	4. Technical components	6. Sociopolitical	8. Socioeconomic change
	Theories of power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pluralist perspective • Managerialism • Critical perspective 	Project Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capabilities workshops • PAToT and networking • Policy seminar • Community workshops Action Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstructured interviews • Participant observation • Semi-structured interviews • Evaluation surveys 	Capabilities <i>(internal and external)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic considerations • Bureaucratic considerations • Critical considerations 	PCN via PIE and PAP to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate sales • Diversify production • Access high-value markets • Maximize competitive advantage • Coordinate research • Expand advocacy • Streamline standards & certification processes

This chapter has provided a broad, but densely layered overview of the major conceptual themes informing Rooibos action research. Though some of these perspectives are seemingly epistemologically incompatible, all are complimentary, and they ultimately coalesce around core humanist themes. In philosophical terms, the PCNR model attempts to build from the diverse efforts of humanist scholars and practitioners, but in practice, it is messy. We sought to streamline multiple conceptual models within the context of commodity networks, and while we met with challenges, the approach provided us with a great deal of flexibility; thus the PCNR model may be adapted for any commodity network arena. Yet momentum is needed to ensure sustainability and scalability. Democracy building requires lengthy investment and the active participation of primary stakeholders. This can be difficult to ensure during daily functioning where time constraints, technical considerations, and other tangible deliverables take immediate precedence. In other words, participatory methods are easy to imagine, but difficult to practice; yet if democratization comes at a price, it ultimately offers far greater reward than its cost, for it opens networks of freedom in which human life may flourish and authentic development may occur (Dewey 1939; Escobar 1995; Peet 1999).

Chapter Three deepens this discussion by detailing project processes and further clarifying the ways in which we applied the conceptual linkages noted here. Using terminology from my partner, Sandra Kruger, serendipity does not fall from the sky. Project goals, objectives, and processes must be well coordinated if opportunities are to be realized. This does not mean that projects should be tightly managed—hierarchical decision making stifles participation—but informed planning is necessary, and teamwork must derive from an explicitly stated commitment to dialogue, transparency, and respect.

CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT PROCESS OR COORDINATED SERENDIPITY⁸

Introduction

This project was generously funded by a \$144,332 grant from USAID's 2010 Horticulture Collaborative Research Support Program (HortCRSP). The HortCRSP group was specifically funding a range of multinational research teams who were working on immediate-impact projects related to horticulture development in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and my project team comprised the sole social science recipients. The research detailed in this dissertation was thereby generated via a broader collaboration between the Center for Fair and Alternative Trade (CFAT) at Colorado State University, the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, and Western Cape-based Sandra Kruger and Associates (SKA). My investigation extended a prior CFAT/PLAAS research collaboration that was conducted from 2003 to 2006, and it built upon thesis research conducted by Siphelo Ngcwangu in 2007. As CFAT Co-Director, Laura Reynolds was closely involved in these previous collaborations and she was instrumental in supporting the 2010 project, though I played a prominent role in terms of project design and implementation.

My primary goal was to conduct research that would enable me to scale-up PAR to a commodity network framework. As a training service provider with expertise in South African rural development as well as in alternative standards and certifications, SKA was able to provide the institutional capacity for running a major training program. The head of this firm, Sandra Kruger, had previously studied value chain analysis as a graduate student at PLAAS. At that

⁸ Serendipity is a sociological method in which the researcher takes advantage of unanticipated or anomalous findings in order to drive theory formation (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

time, she developed publications in conjunction with PLAAS and CFAT scholars to examine governmental and market-based responses to the acute racial inequalities found South African agriculture. In terms of this project, her goal was to integrate value chain analysis with producer capacity building in market standards and certification systems. By working together, Sandra and I hoped to devise producer support mechanisms that would ensure better development outcomes.

In many ways, project inception was serendipitous, although different team members worked hard to lay the framework for opportunity. The HortCRSP immediate-impact-project opportunity came suddenly in November of 2009. We secured funding in January 2010 and by March I was on a plane for South Africa. Due to the rapid nature of project inception and the complex goals in which we hoped to achieve, my project partners and I developed a clear division of labor. As Co-Principal investigators, Sandra and I were central actors in each project component. Not only did we implement activities, we were involved with all project groups and served as a bridge between diverse stakeholders. In South Africa, SKA provided me office space, where I worked closely with Lisa Ryser as well as its broader team of specialists to develop and implement project activities. Whereas SKA took the lead in training management and delivery, I led action research, but our efforts increasingly merged as we developed a unified commodity networking program. Farmer leaders likewise comprised primary project team members and they were responsible for participating in training, action research, and commodity networking activities, as well as monitoring and evaluating the efficacy of these.

CFAT Co-Director, Douglas Murray was also a Co-Principal investigator, and he guided broader institutional collaborations. Laura Raynolds and Andries du Toit of PLAAS comprised the Principal Investigators. Support staff included a technical research assistant housed at CFAT, South African fieldwork assistants, SKA staff, and various industry actors who provided

technical and training support. The South African Rooibos Council (SARC) was active in some aspects of the project, including the policy seminar, and this umbrella group now formally supports an emerging farmer network within the Council. Figure 3.1 provides a conceptual diagram of this division. Note that while there was some hierarchy in terms of leadership, the triangle also denotes a more circular formation in which the Co-Principal investigators comprised a core node.

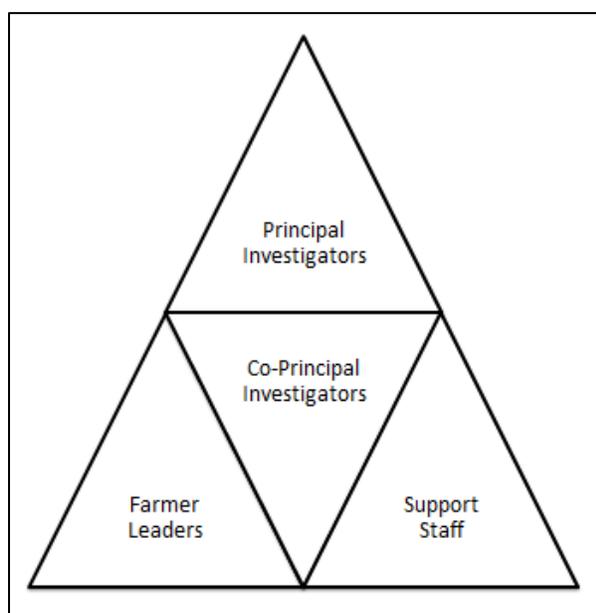


Figure 3.1: Project Division of Labor

Project successes were largely dependent upon the active participation of farmer leaders who united to develop a collaborative information exchange network. The leaders have been active in sharing market information with their communities in order to clear up misunderstandings and are developing steps forward. While the lack of funding and geographic dispersal of the broader team complicates future engagement, my South African partners have incorporated the leaders into other projects to scale up initial efforts. That said, this chapter

focuses on the processes and outcomes of the one-year project in which I was closely involved. Via a discussion of participatory commodity network research (PCNR) tools, I clarify participation, teamwork, and networking strategies for participatory development actors.

I begin this chapter by detailing project planning, where I briefly discuss pre-project activities and provide a programmatic overview. Next, I clarify the primary ethical considerations driving the project and explain how we integrated monitoring and evaluation components into our training and research modules. I then detail the myriad PCNR activities that we developed, including: (1) capabilities workshops, (2) training-of-trainer workshops, (3) action research components, (4) commodity networking activities, (5) community workshops, and (6) project evaluation surveys. I conclude by exploring next steps, many of which were discussed by team members at project end. To maintain focus, I limit my analysis to participant observation findings fundamentally relevant to project process, but where warranted note the chapters covering broader information.

Project Planning

I sought to enter South Africa with as few assumptions as possible by purposively refraining from in-depth secondary analysis of the research arena. However, in order to develop the initial grant proposal, some background research was necessary, and while the literature on Rooibos production was scarce, what was available did point to numerous recent smallholder successes, including discussion of their collaborative and innovative approaches to market access. When I arrived in South Africa, I expected the smallholder communities to be well organized, in regular communication with the broader Rooibos network, and focused upon collaborative smallholder growth. Yet these communities are comprised of emerging farmers

who have only recently entered commercial markets which remain marked by longstanding inequalities, and I found the reality of their situation to be much more complex than either I or my South African colleagues had assumed. Thus, we had to reassess our entry approach.

When my project partner and I arrived in Wupperthal in early 2010 to determine project interest, the communities were in disarray due to a number of cooperative-based problems. Many farmers were angry because they had not received payment for their crop and no longer wanted to engage with Rooibos-related projects as they felt these were a waste of their time. During our exploratory visits, numerous farmers also cited research fatigue because they felt that previous projects had failed to deliver on promises made. These local-level conflicts reflected broader issues within the Rooibos commodity network and related development sector. Many emerging farmers—particularly those operating in remote outstations—lacked appropriate levels of technical support, and some felt that divisions between cooperative management, producer members, and broader organizations were driven by and a result of training imbalances. Given this contentious backdrop, the project outcomes described in this chapter are promising, but ongoing support is necessary in order to scale-up achievements and ensure sustainability.

The rapid timeframe in which we were required to pursue project funding precluded us from including the Rooibos communities in grant writing; yet the PAR literature notes the need to include participants in all stages of projects, including preliminary planning (MacIntyre 2008; McTaggart 1997). Participating communities should co-determine project processes, outputs, and indicators, but these are often excluded because such decisions must occur before projects formally begin. Some of the farmers complained of previous involvement with top-down development projects where beneficiaries often represent little more than numbers to be counted by external experts who make decisions on their behalf, often without consultation.

Grant writing is a skill of acute relevance to local community members seeking greater ownership of development efforts, and inclusion offers an excellent training opportunity; yet, in practice, participatory planning is problematic. Travel costs are high, particularly in rural areas that lack adequate telecommunications access. Moreover, grant writing requires technical skill that necessarily implies training for anyone doing it. In short, inclusion requires funding, but funding requires grant writing. These issues may be less relevant in cases where groups work together over long periods of time, but such ideal conditions are rare, and these forms of engagement may exacerbate dependencies. While we were unable to directly include the communities in initial project planning, we were acutely aware of this issue. SKA had previously been involved with emerging Rooibos communities, and while the grant application was largely formulated on U.S. computers, our vision derived from dialogue that had occurred between SKA and the Rooibos Council in response to emerging farmer demands for industry representation. To ensure responsiveness, we developed a project proposal that prioritized process over topic, and we sought breadth when developing performance indicators. This allowed us to work with stakeholders to personalize training and more effectively meet needs.

The team conducted this project over a 12 month period, starting in early 2010. In accordance with PAR precepts, our conceptual framework was cyclical rather than linear: each phase broadly informed the next, but many activities were ongoing. Apart from preliminary information gathering, the bulk of data collection and capacity building took place during my time in South Africa, from March through December, although some of the leaders facilitated their community workshops after my departure, and worked with SKA to conduct the final survey in early 2011, at project end. Table 3.1 outlines the various components, as well as the

data collection strategies from each phase. Note that this is a final rendering of what was an evolving project process.

Table 3.1: Research Project Outline

Method	Project Phase	Activities and Outputs	Data Collection
02/2010-06/2010	Community entry and information building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite project participation • Map commodity network • Capabilities workshops • Leadership elections • Capabilities indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Unstructured organizational and farmer interviews • Participant observation
06/2010-02/2011	Leadership, community, and institutional capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three multi-day ToT workshops • Modular toolbox of training material and farmer guide to standards and certification • Commodity networking • PAR training and fieldwork • Assist leadership in designing and delivering workshops • Develop SARC Emerging Farmer Working Group and secure representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant observation • Document analysis • Semi-structured leader and farmer interviews • Semi-structured commodity network interviews
11/2010-02/2011	Project and policy evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy seminar • Evaluate outcomes/materials • Funder report • Executive summary • Set of papers and publications (<i>ongoing</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant observation • Document analysis • Project evaluation surveys

Upon my arrival in South Africa, SKA and I sought to integrate our programmatic agendas. I wanted to move directly to emerging Rooibos communities, but these areas were widely dispersed and rather remote and it was necessary to spend periods of time in the southern Cape, where I could work closely with SKA on programmatic details and conduct network interviews. I began fieldwork in the southern Cape by working with SKA on preliminary

planning and enrolling in Afrikaans language lessons. SKA's office was located in Pniel—a Coloured church-based community with a similar history as many of the emerging Rooibos communities. I found housing in Pniel, where I resided with a woman who was active in the community. She and other residents helped me learn Afrikaans and integrate into South African Coloured culture. Throughout fieldwork, I moved between Pniel and project areas, with extended stays in the Rooibos communities during midterm fieldwork, at which time a Pniel delegation traveled to a project community to donate goods and establish inter-community ties.

To align our goals and determine approach, SKA and I conducted a number of informational meetings. In 2009, SKA completed a socioeconomic survey that mapped the South African Rooibos industry. This study had used snowball sampling in order to survey emerging Rooibos farmers, and this information helped us devise an entry strategy. As the survey investigated multiple dimensions, we engaged findings to develop the baseline indicators reported at the end of this chapter. The next step involved exploratory visits to various Rooibos communities in March and April of 2010. I was actively engaged in Afrikaans lessons, and my willingness to rapidly integrate into an Afrikaans-speaking environment helped me make initial connections with community members. During our exploratory visit, we learned about the recent cooperative changes, including the deterioration in relations that had occurred since SKA's 2009 visit. As such, we visited community outstations before meeting with cooperative representatives. In Wupperthal, this strategy ended up being critical: during a meeting, a female producer held out her hand to say that the fingers represented the farmers while the palm was the cooperative. Her point was that outstation farmers needed the most support, yet received the least, and we repeatedly heard this message throughout our visit in the region. The farmers we

met appreciated our efforts to talk directly with them, and convinced us to maintain a community- rather than cooperative-based focus.

Our goal was to invite all emerging farmers into the project, but we were not able to make an exploratory visit to every community because these are widely dispersed. In some instances, we relied upon associations and cooperatives to extend our project invitation to their members, using a combination of phone calls, emails, and flyers for dissemination. This strategy worked well with the smaller associations which all became actively involved in the project. In the context of the larger cooperatives, it failed. Members of one cooperative did not show up to the Wupperthal capabilities workshops, and as a consequence were not represented in our farmer leadership group. Many of these members resided in small communities near Wupperthal that we had not reached during our exploratory visits as we had been more focused on the far-flung outstations. During midterm fieldwork, I spoke with some who felt they had been explicitly excluded. Another cooperative declined involvement. Citing research fatigue, it discouraged us from making any contact with its members and we respected this decision. Finally, we did not capture every emerging group in our initial invitation. After the project had begun, a group of farmworkers who were in the process of becoming emerging producers requested involvement. We had not known of this group's existence and involved them in subsequent training though it was too late to integrate their communities into all project activities, including action research.

PAR is a reflexive methodology based on a cyclical principle of reflection and action. Mistakes are lessons learned, and omissions offer future research avenues, but some dilemmas are not entirely resolvable. It is nearly impossible to completely ensure direct communication in remote communities that lack access to decent roads and telecommunications infrastructure, though these are often most in need of assistance. Participatory approaches also pose unique

ethical challenges, particularly in the context of navigating gatekeepers. Researchers must consider whether to pursue direct contact with everyone, or to respect requests from local organizations representing member interests. Such decisions have real consequences, but there is no universal answer. Project facilitators must discuss the particular context and arrive at an appropriate decision. In this sense, project team formation is critical. Whereby international researchers may offer the fresh dynamic of an unaffiliated outsider, PAR efforts should always include local team members that possess in-depth knowledge of the project terrain.

Despite our difficulties in terms of ensuring full inclusion, we did our best to invite the participation of all emerging farmers, and our multipronged strategy was largely successful: we reached 246 of approximately 353 farmers.⁹ Table 3.2 delineates the differing emerging farmer communities that actively participated in this project.

Table 3.2: Participating Stakeholders

Method	Region	Participating Groups*
	Wupperthal	1. Langkloof and Eselbank 2. Wupperthal, Langbome, Beukeskraal, Nuweplaas 3. Kleinvlei, Agterstevlei, Grasvlei, Brugkraal 4. Suurrug, Menskraal, Heiveld, Koueberg 5. Heuningvlei and Witwater
	Nieuwoudtville	6. Rooikastert Agriculture Cooperative 7. Independent farmers
	Elim-Spanjaardskloof	8. Strandveld Small Farmers Cooperative
	Clanwilliam	9. Driefontein Small Farmers Primary Cooperative

Note:

* In the Wupperthal region, we responded to farmer input by basing participant groupings on community location rather than on farmer group.

⁹ These two sets of numbers are not generated from the same data set. The first number derives from the farmer census that the leaders generated during project midterm; the second from SKA's 2009 socioeconomic report.

We worked with multiple community-based groups in Wupperthal region as well as with independent farmer associations in Nieuwoudtville, Elim, and Driefontein. Each of these associations have since become cooperatives; thus I list them under their names as of this writing. The majority of our participants came from Wupperthal, which in terms of population, vastly outnumbers any other emerging Rooibos community. As previously mentioned, Driefontein representatives entered the project at a later date, and only attended ToT sessions; for this reason, Chapter Six only covers findings from the participating communities of Wupperthal, Nieuwoudtville, and Elim.

In addition to conducting exploratory visits and co-developing project first-steps, I devoted research time to document analysis and unstructured interviews. My project colleagues had previously worked within the Rooibos sector and provided me with a wealth of information. To map the network groups involved with emerging Rooibos farmers, I examined data from numerous sources, including the SKA socioeconomic report and CFAT commodity network research. I also conducted unstructured interviews with project colleagues and emerging farmers during our exploratory visits and talked with a number of core network actors, including: (1) Fairtrade South Africa, (2) The Southern African Fair Trade Network, (3) Environmental Monitoring Group, (4) Solidaridad, (5) SARC, (6) Heiveld Cooperative, (7) The Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative, and (8) Wupperthal Original Rooibos Cooperative.

I chose to begin project engagement with unstructured interviews in order to transcend any unconscious assumptions that I may have possessed. I also wanted to learn the details considered most important by the experts, and the open interview format enabled me to capture unpublished information about the Rooibos network that proved useful in planning and implementing subsequent project stages.

To summarize the project planning process, SKA and I began by identifying preliminary emerging Rooibos farmer market conditions, constraints, and opportunities. I compiled this information by examining various industry and academic reports, and by conducting unstructured interviews with experts who were directly involved with emerging Rooibos farmer developments. SKA and I made exploratory visits to the communities in order to meet with farmers and community members who assisted in next-step planning by providing invaluable advice. During this time, I actively acquired the language skills and cultural knowledge that would later prove critical during action field research. As an outsider, it was my task to gain the local knowledge that my project colleagues possessed; in return, I shared my own expertise and fresh insights. By initially framing the project as one of information exchange, we were able to develop an atmosphere of co-learning in accordance with PAR precepts (MacIntyre 2008). After our exploratory visits, we conducted planning sessions to incorporate the knowledge shared by the farmers and community members to develop capabilities workshops. At this time, we deepened our discussion on ethics and expanded our monitoring and evaluation approach. I discuss these organizing principles below before describing the specific PAToT components comprising our farmer leadership program.

Ethical Considerations

Given the inherent messiness of qualitative inquiry, numerous scholars operating in this research domain have long problematized the nexus between method and ethics. These contributions examine numerous ethical conundrums that may occur throughout the research process, ranging from topics such as field researcher roles to information management and potential impacts (Adler and Adler 1987; Berg 2004; Creswell 2007; Lofland et al. 2006;

Marshall and Rossman 2011; Weiss 1995). Certain methodological strategies—including PAR and the human capabilities approach—prioritize adherence to ethical processes that are ultimately predicated upon the notion of human rights and participatory democracy (McTaggart 1997; Mohan 2001; Nussbaum 2002; Nussbaum 2003; Sen 1984; Sen 1999; Sen 2004). Yet, scholars are not the only ones who have deepened ethical discourse: within alternative commodity networks, a variety of practitioners have paid similar attention to this critical topic, as they seek to transcend inequitable trading arrangements by instituting more ethical policies and strategies (Conroy 2007; Keahey et al. 2011; Lloyd 2009; McMurty 2008).

Despite the promising contributions of alternative development, the forces of globalization have engendered massive socioeconomic and sociopolitical instability. Much of the mainstream development research continues to be conducted according to static protocols that maintain divisions between those who research and those who are researched. Top-down activities reinforce existing power relations, particularly when conducted with less advantaged populations. At worst these approaches disempower individuals and communities that are vulnerable to exploitation. In other words, the question of ethics makes for good discussion, but its practice remains questionable.

In response to these issues, this project placed ethics at the forefront. The project team was diverse, but we found that we had no difficulty uniting around the various themes of participation, human rights, and democracy. In another research arena, our unifying themes may have been different, but post-Apartheid South Africa remains infused with a spirit of pluralism, and we were able to use this as a tool for overcoming the inevitable inequitable divisions within our own highly heterogeneous group. We began by promoting active community involvement, and engaged a strong gender focus to ensure female inclusion. When planning the project

framework, we recognized that “democratic ends demand democratic methods (Dewey 1939: 176) and sought to democratize training and action research as much as possible. At every stage, we dialoged on ethical considerations, and where issues arose, revised our approach. For example, the farmer leaders and I discussed ethical details during research and data analysis to determine to the terms under which we wished to proceed. SKA likewise facilitated similar discussions during ToT and commodity networking activities. Whereas we did not always agree on substantive issues, we all agreed upon the importance of democratic process, and each of us sought to maximize this to the best of our ability.

The question of leadership was more complicated. Broad-based engagement enables holistic producer support, but it also demands extensive academic, practitioner, and community-level expertise. It is difficult to streamline collaboration between different groups, because farmer, practitioner, and academic members necessarily operate according to differing professional and cultural norms, languages, and agendas. Given this diversity, holistic projects require shared leadership, though actors must ensure an effective division of labor to harmonize engagement. As the team had determined a common operational value system, we were able to transcend communication difficulties. Diverse environments tend to be marked by conflict, particularly within the development arena where disparities are generally pronounced, though other sources of disagreement may include divergence in knowledge, skills, and opinions; yet, when well-managed challenges become dynamic tensions that drive information sharing, problem solving, and collaborative innovation (Di'Tomaso et al. 2007; Herring 2009; Paulson et al. 2009).

PAR precepts framed our overall approach, and as the project evolved, the question of participation became increasingly central. It also proved elusive as we all became more aware of

participation gaps. Project monitoring became a communication strategy in which we were able to exchange information and problematize solutions. Though some procedural discussions occurred during PAToT sessions and in interviews, more often dialogue was spontaneous and informal. Such conversations tended to occur in transit from one interview to the next, or over dinner in the evening. The project facilitators incorporated farmer leader feedback to devise next steps, and by project end, we were all pleased with the growth in partnership that we had achieved. However, we also wished that we could have done more. Figure 3.2 demonstrates the central dilemma facing PAR practitioners seeking to dissolve entrenched inequalities.

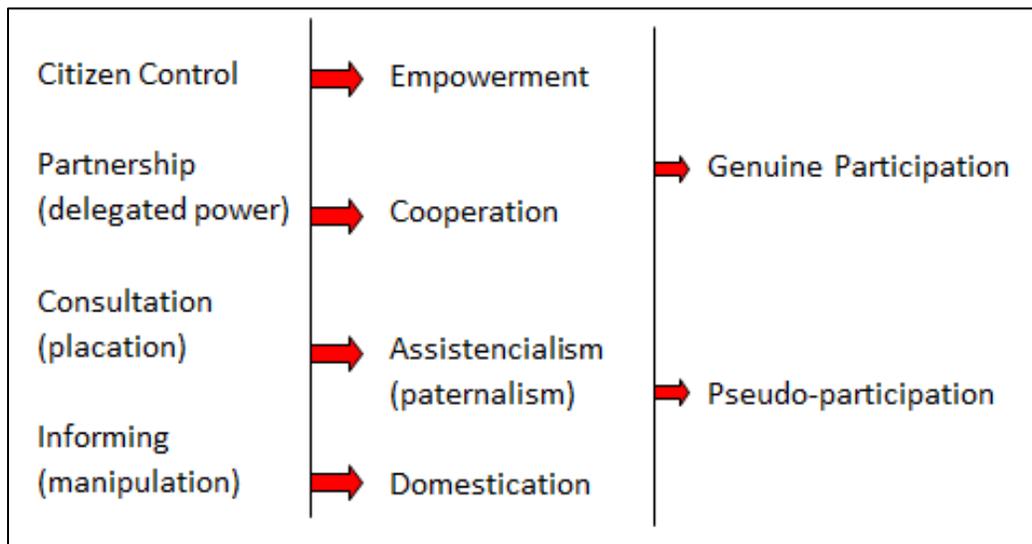


Figure 3.2: Participation Ladder

Sources: (Deshler and Sock 1985; Michener 1998; Selener 1997)

The above ladder denotes the different types of participation found in ‘participatory’ development projects, and despite our best efforts, this project was certainly not immune from the traps of pseudo-participation. However, I do believe that we managed to avoid manipulation, and at times we were all empowered to learn, stretch, and grow into genuine participation. In

practice it can be difficult to distinguish between pseudo- and genuine forms of participation, particularly when project actors must meet multiple requirements and demands in a rapidly evolving research arena. Moreover, whereas sociocultural differences may occasionally be glaring, these may be less visible in environments where everyone wants to get along.

Power imbalances are intractable precisely because they are so often subtle, and as members of a fundamentally unequal world, we all have been conditioned into behaving in socially proscribed ways. Our ways of being have been informed by centuries of colonial conquest, and postcolonial inequalities as well as seemingly individual habits can reinforce the divisions that have been engrained in our collective consciousness and that play out in our daily relations. In other words, pseudo-participation does not require any intent to manipulate, but pseudo-participatory outcomes can be a consequence of unconscious action. In contrast, genuine participation requires awareness building via active dialogue and willingness to change.

The project team worked hard to come together. We were professional, but did not engage as mere colleagues. We achieved better outcomes because we broke bread, roasted meat, and drank wine together. We shared our homes, dreams, and knowledge; we agreed, disagreed, and reconciled. How does one diffuse such a complex process into a concise and scholarly discussion on ethics, particularly when individuals experience reflexive engagement differently? For me the process became one of giving up research control, of accepting some methodological messiness in favor of participation. This was not always easy but by prioritizing process over outcome, I gained critical insights. I learned that our ends reflect the roads we have travelled and realized that trust-based relationships require multidirectional transparency and accountability. I discovered that effective leadership means knowing how to delegate, and found that the active participation of other team members enhanced rather than diminished data validity.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The facilitators began the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process, but we involved the leaders by increasingly integrating assessment with activity. At project end, the leaders conducted final project evaluation. To measure performance we used these strategies: (1) M&E planning, (2) capabilities assessments, (3) learner assessments, (4) training and activity evaluations, (5) midterm community fieldwork, and (6) evaluation surveys. We connected PAR with M&E in order to use findings to stimulate commodity networking. As we completed a variety of assessments, monitoring segued into a multidirectional communication strategy in which team members conducted personal and peer assessments and discussed activity outcomes.

Table 3.3 highlights the wealth of M&E data that we collected in both English and Afrikaans. We condensed findings into dense quarterly reports that included quantitative and narrative components.

Table 3.3: Monitoring and Evaluation

Method	M&E Outputs	Data Collection
Community entry and information building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability ranking • Learner workbooks • Workshop reports • Baseline indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document analysis • Unstructured organizational and farmer interviews • Participant observation
Leadership, community, and institutional capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner workbooks • Learner assessments • Pilot of learner guides • Training evaluations and reports • Participatory action field research • Project facilitator SWOT-Vs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant observation • Document analysis • Semi-structured leader and farmer interviews • Semi-structured commodity network interviews
Project and policy evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy seminar • Farmer leader surveys • Community surveys • Quarterly reports • Final executive summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant observation • Document analysis • Evaluation surveys

When planning M&E, we moved from the general to the specific by clarifying overarching goals, specific objectives, planned activities and outcomes to meet those objectives, qualitative and quantitative measures of success, and planned documentation of success. This format derived from the HortCRSP model which we integrated into our activities. As we could not involve the emerging Rooibos communities in initial grant writing, we generated a set of goals and objectives specific enough to serve as a measurable guide, yet general enough to adapt to stakeholder needs. Whereas our framework remained constant, activities and outputs evolved due to leader input. We listed a wide array of training topics in our grant proposal to capture potential needs. During the capabilities workshops, we asked participants to rank potential topics then used findings to build a program tailored to their expressed needs. Table 3.4 lists our goals and objectives. Note that these are procedurally rather than topically oriented.

Table 3.4: Project Goals and Objectives

Method	Goals	Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build local scientific and technical capacity • Apply research findings and technical knowledge to increase emerging producers' participation in markets • Facilitate the development of policies that improve local horticultural trade and export capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify emerging farmer capabilities, opportunities, and constraints • Develop institutional capacity of the Rooibos Council to provide an enabling environment for emerging farmers through the implementation of training and support services • Implement participatory training services to improve market access prospects for emerging farmers • Evaluate project outcomes to analyse existing emerging farmer policies and inform ongoing policy development and reform at both the national and international levels

As a methodological model predicated upon a framework of cyclical praxis, PAR projects demand a great deal of self-reflexivity. We used SWOT analysis to frame self-assessment, though we did not do so consistently and later realized that we had missed an excellent opportunity to standardize this process. This lack of consistency was due to the fact that our decision to integrate SWOT-V analysis into training developed out of the PAR process itself. We first incorporated the SWOT tool into capabilities workshop learner workbooks in order to capture participant perceptions. At this time, we expanded upon the concept of the SWOT to incorporate vision (SWOT-V) so that we could capture livelihood goals as well. By having participants assess their own capabilities and visions, we were able to gain insight into their capacities and needs.

In later project stages, we recognized the possibility of using SWOT-Vs for project team members to conduct regular self-assessments and to continue developing an aligned vision for project progress. Although Sandra Kruger and I each completed a personal SWOT-V at project mid-term, we never managed to standardize the SWOT-Vs in such a manner, though we did discuss the possibility. In retrospect this would have been ideal. SWOT-Vs help one track personal as well as collective development, and had we integrated the concept from the beginning of our involvement, it would have been relatively easy to formalize the process into each major project stage.

The chart that I drew up shortly before departing to the Rooibos communities for two months of field research clearly demonstrates how my closer involvement with the farmer leaders and their communities transformed my own orientation. Although farmers possess any number of worldviews, my fieldwork goal was to understand issues from their perspective so that I would more effectively capture their challenges and opportunities. My midterm SWOT-V,

reprinted below in Table 3.5, demonstrates that prior to midterm fieldwork I was using the commonplace development language of ‘beneficiaries’ and ‘experts’. By the time I left the field, I more clearly recognized the hierarchical assumptions of such terminology and had replaced such terms with the more equitable language of ‘stakeholder’ and ‘team’.

Table 3.5: SWOT-V

Method	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory, synthetic thinking, and broad project conceptualization • Good at writing • Politically and culturally tactful/sensitive • Willing to embed myself within communities 24/7 • “Outsider” perspective • Have full support of dissertation committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack Afrikaans skills—not enough time to effectively learn • Difficulty remembering names • Better with big picture than logistical details • Lack specific knowledge of South African standards • Work best in intense spurts—less efficient when not under pressure • Need time alone to rejuvenate; hard to get given living circumstances
	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fantastic project team with strengths in areas where I am weak • Support from S to find creative solutions to fieldwork issues • Integrate my research with L’s research to optimize productivity • See the world from the perspective of farmers; live in their communities and learn from them • More fully involve farmer leaders in research to optimize productivity and transfer skills • Integrate dissertation with book writing to facilitate eventual shift • Potential to co-author numerous articles with multiple experts • Future opportunities for expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding shortage to achieve desired level of field research; minimizes potential to fully involve beneficiaries • Difficult to juggle multiple project and research roles—I sometimes worry that I’m being overly ambitious in everything • Pursuing future funding takes time and energy away from project and research • Managing industry politics takes time and energy away from project and research • No time to begin writing articles though this is needed
Vision: See the world from the perspective of emerging Rooibos farmers		

Participatory Commodity Network Research

To generate PCNR, we completed multiple project activities, including capabilities workshops, three multi-day training sessions, action research, commodity networking, community workshops, and project evaluation surveys. After conducting gender-equitable leadership elections at the end of each capabilities workshop, we used workshop findings to determine training topics and plan next-steps. As the leaders became involved in the project, we brought them into planning, and developed action research and commodity networking activities to promote multilateral information exchange with a view toward enhancing information exchange and action planning prospects within the broader Rooibos commodity network. As part of this process, I conducted extensive interviews. I took notes in English and recorded formal interviews. Many interviews were conducted in Afrikaans or in a mixture of English and Afrikaans, and given the language complications I did not transcribe each interview, though I did listen to the recordings multiple times in order to confirm and enhance my written notes.

By including the leaders in data analysis, we maximized PIE during final project stages when they expanded commodity networking and facilitated their own workshops. We did not have the time to implement PAP within the broader commodity network, but we set the stage for this. We began the overall process by envisioning a learning approach similar to that of Barrientos and colleagues (2005), but reflexively developed our own learning cycle as we progressed. This learning cycle comprised both practitioner-led training and networking cycles as well as scholar-led action research cycles, with periods of reflection and action for both. We sought to harmonize our engagement at project inception to ensure appropriate pacing, but in reality, we overestimated what we could achieve during the project timeframe, and the pace was routinely grueling. Yet, there were periods between each project activity in which project team

members were dispersed and engaged with research or training reflection, and these periods enabled us to envision solutions to problems that had arisen during previous project cycles. Table 3.6 details these periods of action and active reflection.

Table 3.6: PCNR Learning Cycle

Method	Learning and Assessment Activities
Reflect	Project: entry: exploratory visits; invite participation; plan workshops Research: unstructured interviews; commodity network analysis
Act	Project: capabilities workshops; hold farmer leader elections Research: participant observation; monitor project functioning
Reflect	Project: assess performance; design training materials; plan networking; Research: analysis of capabilities outputs; develop baseline indicators
Act	Project: 1 st ToT workshop; leaders assess training materials; networking Research: participant observation; monitor project functioning
Reflect	Project: assess performance; design training materials; plan networking Research: analysis of ToT outputs; fieldwork planning; draft PAR training and interviews; generate farmer lists; organize community stays
Act	Project: 2 nd ToT workshop; leaders assess training materials; networking Research: participant observation; monitor functioning; PAR fieldwork
Reflect	Project: assess performance; design training materials; plan networking Research: analysis of PAToT outputs; design data analysis training; draft and organize commodity network interviews
Act	Project: 3 rd PAToT workshop; leaders assess community training needs and design workshops; networking Research: participant observation; monitor project functioning; participatory data analysis; commodity network interviews
Reflect	Project: assess performance; compile community workshop training materials based on leader instructions; leaders organize workshops Research: analysis of PAToT outputs; deepen data analysis
Act	Project: policy seminar: leaders present PAR findings to the network; community workshops: leaders present industry information to farmers Research: participant observation; monitor project functioning
Reflect	Project: assess performance; finalize modular training material toolbox Research: design evaluation survey questions and survey training module
Act	Project: leader surveys; survey training; community surveys Research: Negotiate project exit; deepen analysis; final project reporting

To conclude, Figure 3.3 conceptually details the core PCNR framework, which ultimately integrates PAToT, PAR, and PCN action cycles to drive PIE, PAA, and PAP. The arrows in the diagram represent the reflexive, rather than hierarchical nature of the process, and in reality, many of our activities were overlapping which enabled us to maximize both project efficiency and effectiveness.

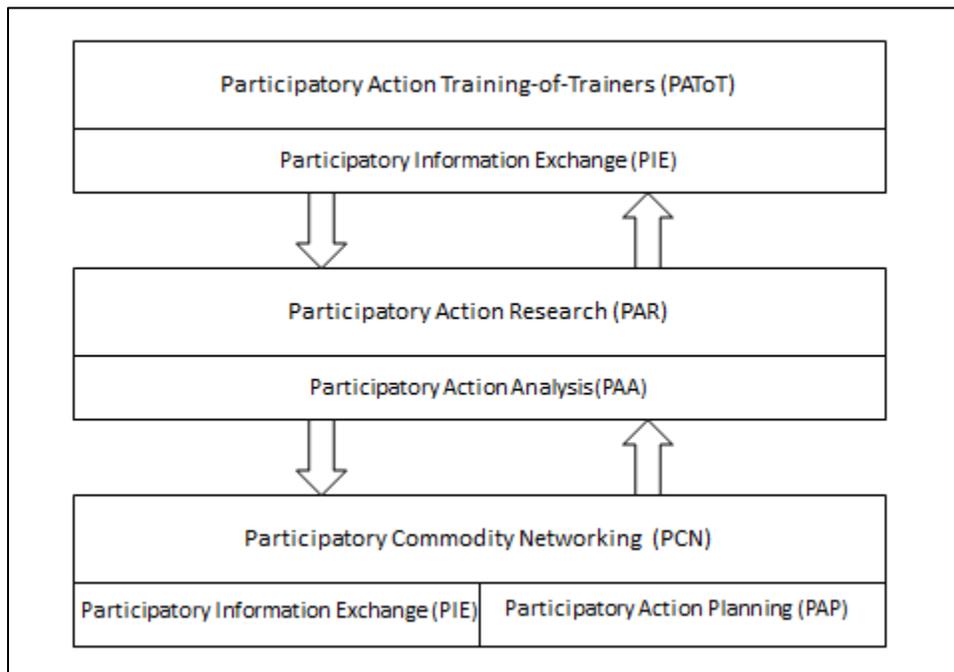


Figure 3.3: PCNR Framework

Capabilities Workshops and Leadership Elections

When designing the capabilities workshops, we integrated the human capabilities approach with participatory rural appraisal (PRA) which offers farmer field school strategies (Chambers 1983; Chambers 1994). We heeded Sen’s call to generate quality-of-life assessments in conjunction with local actors, but incorporated Nussbaum’s list of central human capabilities

as a starting point (Nussbaum 2003; Sen 1999; Sen 2004). Though workshop particulars differed based on the interests of individual community groupings, each workshop broadly included the following components: (1) project and participant introductions, (2) community resource mapping, (3) project and training histories, (4) training needs ranking, (5) SWOT analysis, (6) farmer leader nominations and elections, and (7) workshop evaluation. Activities were interconnected: individuals completed workbook exercises, small groups formed to generate broader outputs, and full group discussion expanded upon these efforts. In many of the workshops, the attendees initially appeared hesitant, and we later learned that many had feared they would simply be instructed by yet another group of outside experts. However the participants became actively engaged once they realized we had designed the workshop to learn from them.

Our primary capabilities outputs consisted of community mapping, training needs ranking, and SWOT analysis. During mapping, we provided members of each attending community with image packets to stimulate group discussion and map formation. Packets included resource and industry images, as well as more ephemeral pictures, informed by Nussbaum's list. Participants used these graphics to construct conceptual community maps that expanded beyond resources to capture broader functionings and deprivations. The images encouraged groups to ask such provocative questions as 'what is BBBEE, and what does it mean to us?' We also brought in technology for on-site image generation. At each workshop, we took photographs of attendees then downloaded and printed these, enabling people to view themselves as resources and to visually insert their image into the exercise. This strategy proved quite popular. The workshop participants appreciated the visual nature of our approach and readily

saw themselves as community resources, as seen in Eselbank's community resource and capabilities map shown in Figure 3.4.



Figure 3.4: Community Resource and Capabilities Mapping

After completing the maps, the participants used findings to begin outlining a history of the projects in their area and discuss training needs. We then facilitated a ranking exercise to determine training priorities. Although we had generated a number of potential topics in advance, we also brought blank cards with us so the participants could offer additional input. The topics that we proposed included: (1) market access, (2) standards, (3) certification, (4) ethical trade, (5) fair trade, (6) organics, (7) biodiversity, (8) food safety, (9) small farmer networks, and (10) financial management. During the workshops, participants added (11) communication and (12) quality, which we then brought with us to subsequent workshops for ranking. Each of the communities ranked the topics quite differently. Though emerging Rooibos groups may appear to be homogenous, in reality they are not; there are certainly common interests, but the

communities participating in this project expressed different priorities. Emerging Rooibos communities have received different forms of assistance; are differentially organized, possess differing livelihood interests; and express diverse political agendas. Thus we used the community rankings to develop our PAToT program, but again strove for breadth. The leaders used rankings from their capabilities workshop to inform participation, and later design the community seminars which they delivered at home. Figure 3.5 shows the final ranking generated at the Heuningvlei workshop.



Figure 3.5: Training Needs Ranking

To help us determine individual capabilities, participants next completed personal SWOT-Vs. While many of the participants were literate, some older attendees had difficulty with writing, and some were illiterate. To maximize participation, our overall approach was highly visual, and we extended visual elements into workbook exercises, including photographic

personalization. As Figure 3.6 shows, we personalized each participant's workbook, placing their photograph on the final 'vision' page. After completing SWOTs, participants considered their existing capabilities then developed a vision, or set of future goals. In cases where individuals struggled with writing, we encouraged young attendees to assist their elders, and we also helped as requested. We concluded this exercise by conducting a group SWOT, and in some workshops, participants also generated a group vision.

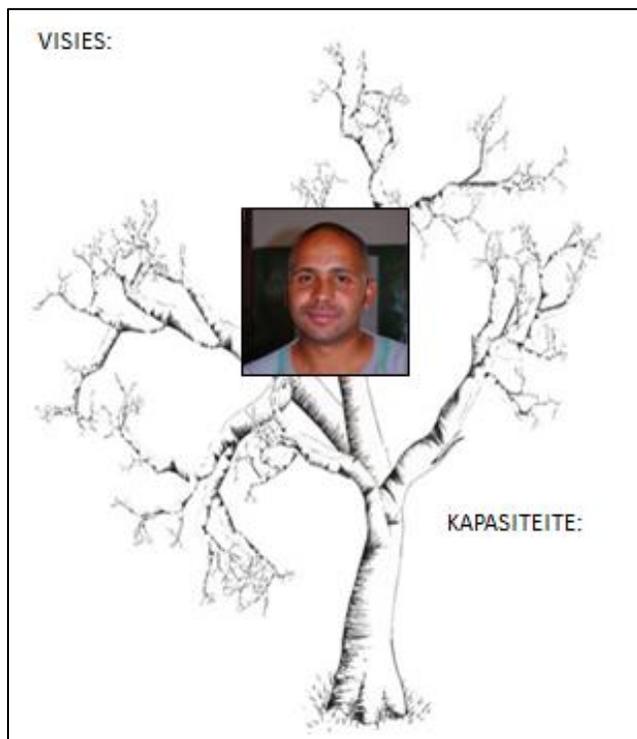


Figure 3.6: Capabilities and Vision Exercise

We concluded the capabilities workshops with farmer leadership nominations and elections. Approximately 66 percent of South Africa's emerging Rooibos tea farmers are male, thus there is significant female involvement. Moreover, women who do not farm Rooibos assist those in their families that do with harvesting and other activities. Yet, although fairtrade

cooperatives in particular have encouraged female involvement, as a population, women remain significantly less involved in managerial positions in the communities and within the broader industry (Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010). We maintained a strong gender focus by asking workshop participants to elect both a female and a male farmer leader. This was not an extraneous demand—many of the community groupings are quite remote from one another, and the dual leadership role enabled leaders to more effectively support one another as well as their communities.

We found that the communities were equity minded and receptive to the idea of dual-gender leaders. That said three of our seven community groupings had difficulties fulfilling this request, albeit for different reasons. In one of our smaller workshops, there were almost no female members, and the few women present did not wish to run for election. We respected this and held elections for one leader as this group was quite small and already guided by a very active man. A Wupperthal community initially elected two leaders, but the female leader soon had to leave the program because her job would not allow her to attend the ToT sessions. The Wupperthal farmer leaders resolved this issue on their own, asking us to admit another woman into the leadership program though she was located in another community grouping. This worked well as the grouping with three leaders was remote and dispersed, whereas the community with one leader was centrally located. In the third case, the young women at the workshop were reluctant to run for election even after an elderly female passionately encouraged them to do so. This issue was not resolved at the workshop, but one did express interest and soon after agreed to join the leadership program. She was an active leader but did experience difficulty with some of the younger males in her area due to her new role.

Apart from the gender clause, we had only one other election requirement: the nominee had to be present at the capabilities workshop as this essentially comprised a preliminary PAToT session. We did not require the leaders to be Rooibos farmers: communities made their own decisions regarding appropriate leadership qualifications. They also managed the nomination and election process in different ways, though all of the elections were democratic in form. We trusted the decision making process of the participants, and found the resulting leadership team to be comprised of dynamic individuals. Some were young, others older; a few had jobs and others were extremely poor. One of our leaders was white: he had married into a Wupperthal community and wished to give back to his adopted home. Over the course of the project, the leaders developed a strong sense of group solidarity and supported the efforts of one another.

After the capabilities workshops, the facilitators shifted into a reflection phase to examine findings, and develop personalized workshop reports that we disseminated to the leaders to share with their communities. We seriously regarded community inputs and began designing PAToT workshops only after we had thoroughly examined and discussed the outputs generated the capabilities workshops. Because so many of the communities had highlighted communication as a core problem, we developed a training component on this topic, and refocused project efforts to maximize information exchange. We also used capabilities findings to complete a baseline indicator matrix that informed PAR fieldwork. Over time, these indicators led to the formation of baseline capabilities findings that I outline at the end of this chapter as part of my next steps discussion.

PAToT Workshops

The PAToT sessions primarily consisted of three multi-day workshops, but also included smaller training modules that we conducted during fieldwork and networking activities. Table 3.7 provides a complete list of farmer leader training topics.

Table 3.7: PAToT Topics

Method	Production/Market	Management/Leadership	Research
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research/strategies • Standards/certification • Fairtrade/organics/UTZ • Right Rooibos/biodiversity • Branding • Rooibos production • Food safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal/written communication • Financial management • Recordkeeping • Industry networking • Workshop planning • Public speaking • Workshop facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociopolitical theories • Research methods/ethics • Interviewing • Translation • Data analysis • Community evaluation

I have conceptually separated action research and commodity networking components for the sake of clarity, and discuss training that we facilitated during these activities in the appropriate sections below; however, in practice, PAToT delivery was interconnected. Commodity networking occurred during PAToT sessions as we brought in industry actors to facilitate specific sessions, and took leaders on various tours. Further, we scheduled workshops around broader commodity networking activities— including attendance at commodity networking events— in order to maximize efficiency and minimize transport costs. As such, PAToT sessions tended to be directly followed with in-depth networking. This enabled farmer leaders to apply the information they had learned in training sessions. We presented on multiple topics during each workshop; thus the sessions were intensive. Commodity networking alignment helped optimize knowledge retention, but we also repeated information in multiple

ways, and across sessions. Some leaders expressed difficulty in terms of remembering specific technical details that they had learned during training, but all significantly strengthened their confidence levels, professional capacity, and general analytical abilities, enabling them to become effective leaders able to recall, access, and share technical information.

While there was some overlap, the three workshops prioritized different training topics. During the first PAToT, we focused on recordkeeping, communication, and financial management training, but also began industry training by arranging for an industry actor to take the leaders on a tour of the processing facility where we held our workshops. The second PAToT prioritized market and production training, and included sessions on standards and certification, Rooibos labeling, biodiversity, and in-field organic training. Industry agents facilitated the organic and biodiversity sessions, and an American doctoral student involved in marketing research conducted the labeling session. As this PAToT occurred in the middle of my field research, I also facilitated a session on research ethics and translation, asking the leaders with whom I had already worked to share their insights with those who were awaiting my arrival. Finally we designed the third PAToT so that farmer leaders could review training material—including the capabilities workshop outputs initially generated by their communities—and design their own workshops. At this time, we conducted sessions on design and facilitation and I also managed a participatory action analysis (PAA) module to begin examining the fieldwork data we had collected. At the end of each PAToT, the leaders completed assessments. We later published these in reports that summarized session activities for dissemination, and leaders used these summaries to share technical information within their communities.

In keeping with PAR methodology, we designed the PAToT program to be both reflective and reflexive. We began our first session by asking the leaders to write down their

expectations of themselves, their fellow leaders, the facilitators, and key industry groups. During this activity, leaders stressed the importance of self-motivation and the need to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and teamwork, noting that communication would be critical to the formation of a good team. They also asked the facilitators to be understanding of their needs and to explain information in ways that everyone could understand. We also designed the training sessions to be highly participatory. Not only did we offer a variety of interactive group exercises during in-house sessions, the leaders actively took notes and asked questions during field activities. We continued our work after hours, holding informal discussions over dinners and barbecues, one of which was arranged by an involved Rooibos extension officer. The leaders had homework as well. During the first PAToT, we asked the leaders to review their training and to prepare a speech on a topic of their choice. Some of the leaders found this activity to be daunting, but all performed well, and this positive experience served to energize us all.

Some of the farmer leaders were quite nervous at the start of the ToT program. Despite the participatory nature of our capabilities workshops, some were concerned that training sessions would revert into a top-down program that would not meet their interests and/or needs; others—in particular some of the women—worried about their own ability to perform, fearing that they would not be able to retain information and thereby represent their communities well. Yet by the end of the first PAToT, all of the leaders expressed a sense of growing confidence. For example, before the session in which the leaders were to present their speeches, some were nervous and the group requested time for a communal prayer. A female leader delivered a powerful appeal to faith, courage, and growth and the moment proved cathartic. By the third PAToT, the leaders had continued to expand their confidence levels and were ready to take control of the training process. Much of this final workshop was devoted to their independent use

of the various materials we provided, so that the co-leaders of each community grouping could develop personalized workshops based on the expressed needs of their area.

Finally, in terms of materials development, SKA developed two booklets for each of the multi-day sessions: learner guides and learner workbooks. The guides consisted of relevant topical information whereas the workbooks offered individual and group exercises. We used the workbooks to monitor and assess the performance of each learner so that we could provide individualized support and ensure program accreditation. Though SKA prepared pilot materials prior to each PAToT, we incorporated input from previous training cycles to develop the workshops. We also used technology to revise pilot materials during the actual sessions as a PIE strategy. By projecting the learner guides onto a screen and immediately updating the documents according to participant input, the leaders could witness the impact of their contributions and begin taking ownership of the material. The leaders later used these books as reference materials when working in their community groupings. By the time that the leaders were ready to develop their workshops, SKA had incorporated the training material into a modular toolbox format, in which they could select appropriate training modules for their chosen workshop topics. The leaders then provided us with the necessary printing instructions for the booklets they had designed. The training material and reports were all highly visual, and printed in color. This enabled all of the leaders to effectively share the information therein with their community members.

Participatory Action Research

This project component comprises a primary aspect of our broader PCNR program in which we generated multiple data layers. Not only did I conduct unstructured interviews prior to

the capabilities workshops in order to build my own knowledge of the project arena, I collected participant observation data by taking extensive fieldnotes during project activities, and by maintaining a research journal for deeper reflection, and I later augmented this data by conducting a series of commodity networking interviews. Whereas the project team initially viewed project and research functions as separate, we soon recognized the nexus between project participant observation and action research as we all became participant observers generating and sharing information through formal reports and informal dialogue. This multiple investigator triangulation enhanced our overall data validity. With these interconnections in mind, we intensively began data collection during PAR fieldwork at project midterm when I embedded myself in each of the community groupings to conduct research with the farmer leaders. I facilitated a number of in-field training modules to prepare them for their role as co-researchers and directly involved each leader in sampling and interviewing.

We generated two sets of fieldwork data. The first derived from socioeconomic interviews that we conducted with emerging Rooibos farmers in each of the participating groupings—the findings of which I present in Chapter Six. Although our sample did not capture the entire emerging farmer population, this was not our goal, and we did generate a representative sample of the participating communities enabling us to incorporate the concerns of multiple groups of farmers. The second data set derived from sociopolitical interviews that I conducted with the farmer leaders and cover in Chapter Seven. Prior to fieldwork, I prioritized developing a research strategy that would allow for in-field adaptation while also ensuring adherence to methodological standards, including sampling, framing, and ethics, and I involved the farmer leaders in the process. Their input enabled me to solve logistical problems, and the

leaders were responsible for setting up the research arena prior to my arrival. Table 3.8 summarizes our fieldwork design.

Table 3.8: Fieldwork Design

Method	Socioeconomic Interviews	Sociopolitical Interviews
Target population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer leaders as pilot interviews Emerging Rooibos farmers in participating communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer leaders
Sampling Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stratified random sampling Farmer leader generated community sampling frames 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entire population
Pre-interview training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation Research ethics Action research methods Socioeconomic terminology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociopolitical terminology
Key terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions, problems, and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal versus external Age, family, gender, race, class Equality, equity, inequality Democracy Bureaucracy
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews
Post-fieldwork training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six thinking hats participatory action analysis (PAA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theories of power Six thinking hats PAA

Prior to my arrival in each of the areas, the farmer leaders drew up a sampling frame for each of their groupings using a simple form that I had provided. This census was possible because the groupings were quite localized, and typically consisted of three or four small villages where everyone essentially knew one another. As the largest, the Central Wupperthal grouping totaled 63 farmers. We limited the census to our target population: emerging Rooibos farmers operating in the participating project communities. In addition to listing their names and phone numbers (if available), the leaders specified gender (male or female), age range (18-29, 30-64, or

65 or older), and specific village as we had previously decided to stratify our sample based on these distinctions. We did not initially include cooperative affiliation as a stratification consideration and found this to be problematic once in the field. Although Wupperthal Original cooperative members were listed in our sampling frames, they were underrepresented in our second-week sample. We sought to rectify this by sampling specifically for Original members, but it would have been beneficial to include this consideration in our original sampling frame.

We conducted a stratified random sample of the participating project communities for two reasons: first, we wished to train farmer leaders in sampling and therefore help them develop expertise as research assistants and/or community assessment practitioners; second, the farmer population was relatively diverse and stratified random sampling helped ensure a representative sample of the various groups involved in emerging Rooibos production. We wanted to capture important differences so that the leaders could effectively represent their communities to the industry, and this led me to link socioeconomic interviewing with the sociopolitical interviews that I later conducted with farmer leaders. Moreover, community members were quite interested in our project and wanted to know how we were selecting respondents. In general, the villages were infused with a democratic sensibility, and concerned individuals wanted to ensure that the selection process would be fair. The leaders communicated our sampling strategy to allay community concerns, and the broader population respected our work because of this.

It was often the male farmer leaders that most strongly argued in favor of the equal selection of female respondents. While some women selected for interview understated their knowledge of Rooibos production and/or market concerns, all agreed to the interview and these women offered critical insights that other interviews lacked. Many women farm their own plot, but some have a plot in which their husband manages. In a few cases, female respondents had

very little Rooibos knowledge, but they offered unique insights into broader community development interests—for example, on tourism and small enterprise development potential. In terms of age, I developed the age brackets according to my own understanding of young, middle age, and elder adults, but during fieldwork, some leaders questioned my choice of brackets. Though they failed to reach consensus regarding more appropriate age cutoffs, many generally felt that ‘young adult’ should encompass individuals in their thirties since people in this age range may have more in common with 20s than those in their 40s. Though a relatively minor detail, it would have been methodologically better to develop the age bracket with the farmer leaders, perhaps as part of a fieldwork preparation module during the first PAToT.

Our understanding of participation deepened over the course of pre-fieldwork planning and in-field piloting. This required overcoming personal limitations: for some of the leaders, it meant believing in their intellectual and leadership capacity; for me, it meant deepening my commitment to PAR in order to achieve far more compelling outcomes than mere data collection. Project involvement enabled us to share our research visions well in advance, making adaptation possible. We began problematizing fieldwork details at the first PAToT then made logistical arrangements via telephone. As my Afrikaans proficiency was not sufficient for interviewing, I initially envisioned hiring a few skilled leaders and an external assistant. I asked the leaders to submit applications that required reading a job description in English, self-evaluating their language proficiency, and listing existing skills as well as those that they wished to obtain. Nearly all of the leaders applied. Most felt they should be equally involved in fieldwork, even if it meant dividing their pay into smaller portions or asking those with stronger English skills to work harder than those with less capacity. I revised my approach by integrating an in-field training module to teach the leaders research methods and conceptual framing.

Table 3.9 details our fieldwork schedule which was conducted over a two-month period in the various participating communities.

Table 3.9: Fieldwork Trajectory

Method	Socioeconomic Interviews	Sociopolitical interviews	Cooperative interviews**	Lodging
Eselbank	10*	3		Elder's home
Wupperthal	9*	2		Private home
Suurrug	9*	2		Temporary guesthouse
Kleinvlei	11	2		Farmer leader home
Heuningvlei	9	2		Elder's home
Wupperthal			4	
Nieuwoudtville	5	1		Guesthouse
Elim	5	2		Elder's home
Total	58	14***	4	

Notes:

* External research assistant present.

** In Nieuwoudtville and Elim, I integrated cooperative management interviews into my farmer leader interviews as these represented management. In Wupperthal, I met with two representatives from Small Farmer's and two from Wupperthal Original.

*** The number of sociopolitical interviews exceeds the total number of formally recognized farmer leaders because the elected female leader for Central Wupperthal could not participate in the PAToT program, but engaged in all fieldwork activities.

I spent one week in each of the five Wupperthal groupings, and one half week with the substantially smaller Nieuwoudtville and Elim communities. During the first three weeks, I brought in an external assistant that I had trained to help with preliminary logistics, training, and translation. We began fieldwork by piloting and revising materials with our first group of leaders

in Eselbank in order to ensure accuracy and streamline the process. We largely determined my travel trajectory by beginning in the communities where the leaders had expressed lower levels of English proficiency so that I could operate alone in areas where the leaders had capacity. While the leader in Central Wupperthal spoke excellent English, we worked in this grouping during the second week because it was a large and complex research environment. This also enabled us to print out the revised interview materials that we had re-written after piloting the interviews at the start of our first week.

Whereas the leaders completed the sampling frames prior to fieldwork, we generated the actual sample for each grouping when I arrived. Indeed, the first day was largely devoted to training. Using the template that I had developed in conjunction with my research assistant, the farmer leaders and I discussed and signed a contract outlining our responsibilities. Our use of the template was not merely expedient: it enabled us to be transparent about my assistant's contract so that the leaders could see that he was not receiving more pay simply because he was externally hired or White; indeed his work was essentially more for less. After translation and ethics training, we selected our interview sample then finished the training module by covering concepts and conducting interviews with each of the leaders.¹⁰ In the evening, the farmer leaders assumed responsibility for locating the farmers in our sample, requesting their participation, and scheduling the interview time. We devoted subsequent days to farmer interviews and upon their completion I facilitated the sociopolitical training module, generally on the fourth day. During my final day in the area, I conducted sociopolitical interviews with each of the farmer leaders. In Elim and Nieuwoudtville we followed the same format in less time as our socioeconomic sample size was half that of those in Wupperthal.

¹⁰ Whereas we generated 58 socioeconomic interviews during fieldwork, this number includes the farmer leader interviews that I conducted as part of the training process. Thus, only 44 of the 58 interviews derive from our sampling frame.

The first week pilot proved invaluable, not only in terms of training but also because the suggestions made by the farmer leaders and my assistant significantly helped improve research efficacy. The leaders were active in piloting the fieldwork approach, and as we learned one another's language and shared one another's food we talked frankly about Rooibos farming, market-access, and development concerns. Over the course of the week these conversations segued into frank discussions about race, gender, class, and age. The leaders felt it was absolutely necessary to include age in our eventual analysis given considerations such as elder respect and youth flight. As such, we added this component to our sociopolitical interviews. During the second week, the leaders and external assistant also suggested adding a family dimension to explore inter-family dynamics within the communities, and though I included this component in subsequent interviews, after reviewing our preliminary sociopolitical findings the leaders later felt that inter-family relationships proved less important in terms of explanatory power.

I arrived in the Eselbank community with a sampling plan, but had decided to work out the technical details of sampling in conjunction with my assistant and the leaders during our first-week pilot, and we collaborated to devise a selection process that the leaders could replicate without external support. As our goal was to generate a stratified random sample, we began by separating the names listed in the sampling frame into different categories (eg. young Langkloof female versus young Eselbank female) then sampling from these categories in order to meet the quotas that we had determined together. After separating the names into the appropriate categories, in many cases, the lists were so small that the decision of whom to interview was already made for us. In the case of two or three choices, we decided by coin toss, and for lists up to five we conducted a blind selection of differentially sized matchsticks. Where lists were

larger, we repeated the matchstick process for groups of five—ensuring that every name had a chance for selection—then made final selections via coin toss. Whereas this process may not have been wholly scientific in that people in smaller lists were more likely to be selected than those in larger ones, we prioritized participation over technical perfection.

Replicating the sampling activity in each grouping enabled me to maintain something of the freshness of the first-week pilot while also providing experiential methodological training with the farmer leader duos operating in each area. We discussed such details as whether or not to interview equal numbers of farmers from each village or to pursue a strategy of proportionate stratification. While I standardized the process as much as possible, I left decision making on more minor matters to the discretion of the leaders. As time progressed, I discovered the leaders had somewhat different conceptualizations of ‘farmer’ when generating their sampling frames: in some communities, the list consisted of active farmers, but in others, the leaders had included former farmers and active spouses of farmers. Again, I recognized their authority to choose how best to represent their communities and operated according to their decision making. As participation requires an element of messiness, there is always the potential for sampling bias (Marshall and Rossman 1999; Selener 1997). We worked to ensure as representative a sample as possible but our research was qualitative in scope and not intended for inferential purposes. However, we did want to ensure data validity and by triangulating the findings in which we—as multiple investigators—generated over the course of the socioeconomic interviews, we used participation to our benefit (Berg 2004).

Given its larger population, we sampled for 10 farmers in each of the Wupperthal community groupings. We sought five interviews in Elim and Nieuwoudtville, for a total target of 60 socioeconomic interviews, or 20 percent of the total population. During fieldwork

planning, I decided upon a large sample size for a number of reasons. First, I wished to sample past the point of saturation so that I could ensure data validity despite the methodological complications of bringing multiple actors into the interviews. Second, by conducting more interviews, I would be able to maximize training outcomes. Third, given the political context in Wupperthal, I was not sure how many of the sampled farmers might decline an interview. This last concern proved groundless: there were only a few instances where the selected individual was either unavailable or declined to be interviewed, thus we completed 58 interviews ranging from one to two hours in time. As I also conducted socioeconomic interviews with each of the farmer leaders, 44 of these interviews, or 15 percent of the target population, comprised the random sample. Finally, the decision to sample each community grouping separately proved sound; whereas respondents in each area provided new information, we tended to reach saturation after conducting the fifth or sixth interview within a given location.

The extensive interview format helped the leaders improve their translation skills across several interviews, and enabled them to witness how I shifted my delivery as I engaged with different respondents. Semi-structured interviewing is a flexible data collection strategy in that it allows for the systematic collection of information, while freeing the interviewer to streamline and/or shift questioning in accordance with the information provided by respondents. This style of interviewing requires skill, and after witnessing multiple interviews that I conducted, the leaders were given the opportunity to lead the interview. More than half of the leaders chose to take the lead by interviewing the remaining respondents in our sample. During farmer-led interviews, I only interjected if new information arose that I wanted to pursue, or if a leader had forgotten a critical question, and because our interview team generally consisted of three individuals (myself and two farmer leaders), the non-interviewing leader translated for me.

Far from diminishing the quality of the information we generated, the presence of farmer leaders during interviewing enhanced data collection. Many of the leaders pushed for clarification on a number of points that I would not have known to ask. Because the communities respected the leaders, and as the respondents knew of their involvement in our broader project, they tended to be quite frank, with many looking to them to help solve the Rooibos issues that they were facing. Including community members in the interview process would have been inadvisable had I been conducting highly sensitive interviews. However, in the context of building farmer leadership, this strategy proved indispensable both in terms of data collection and project functioning. Indeed, some of the leaders later reported that their communities more readily recognized their leadership after witnessing their professional research involvement.

The sociopolitical interviews tended to be more relaxed as they were conducted after an intensive bout of socioeconomic interviews. When piloting the sociopolitical component in the first week of fieldwork, I conducted training at the start of each sociopolitical interview. We found this strategy to be time consuming and revised the approach so that I subsequently facilitated training with both leaders the day before conducting these in-depth interviews. This strategy proved more effective as it gave the leaders the ability to learn together as well as time to digest the concepts that I introduced. The sociopolitical interviews were semi structured and ranged from one and a half to three hours. These interviews were conversational in spirit but I limited my contribution to brief and neutral comments to clarify requested points. Moreover, I purposely designed pre-interview training to present a balanced discussion of possible political positions. For example, I covered each social dimension (age, gender, race, and class) by presenting a clear-cut example of equality, equity, and inequality without passing personal judgment. When directly asked, I offered to share my personal opinions after the interviews and

always sought to clarify my personal perceptions as one opinion among many. The farmer leaders presented very different sociopolitical perspectives, and their diversity proved to be an incredible strength when we later conducted data analysis. By explicitly considering sociopolitical issues from multiple standpoints, we were better able to learn from one another, thereby achieving more holistic understanding.

I cannot stress enough the importance of farmer leader contributions to the overall success of the fieldwork process. Research outcomes would never have been possible without their direct involvement. In addition to their involvement as co-researchers, the leaders were responsible for organizing my accommodation and lodging, and my living circumstances ranged from residing with village elders to staying in a temporarily arranged guesthouse that the community had thoughtfully supplied and decorated for my use. Each week provided its own beginning, middle, and end, and the feel of each place remains distinct in my mind.

In most areas the communities fed me, but I had also agreed to bring my own food to share, and spent evenings socializing with the leaders as well as with broader community members. As I had to stretch my budget to cover payment for all of the leaders rather than a smaller number of assistants as originally planned, I could not provide appropriate recompense. The leaders received minimum wage for their hard work, and while I felt guilty about the low pay, the income was quite meaningful to some. Most stressed their appreciation for having the opportunity to develop technical skills: those who struggled with English expanded their knowledge of the language and gained translation capacity while the leaders already possessing such capabilities expanded their technical and conceptual expertise. Still others were most focused on representing their communities. In this regard, fieldwork was successful. By the time

of fieldwork completion, another doctoral researcher had already contacted me because she wished to hire the leaders to assist with her own work.

To conclude, while this section primarily focuses on technical details such as sampling, the fieldwork process was not simply about the numbers. PAR is both a science and an art that can only be learned through active participation. To succeed, the farmer leaders and I had to do the following: (1) set priorities, (2) think through numerous, and often conflicting details, (3) make technical decisions rapidly, (4) take sensible chances, (5) make mistakes, (6) share our errors, and (7) support one another as co-learners of this process. Figure 3.7 illustrates the fieldwork team. We each provided input and took ownership of the PAR process. By embedding myself with the leaders, I achieved multiple goals, ranging from midterm monitoring to socioeconomic and sociopolitical data collection, as well as next step project development.



Figure 3.7: PAR Fieldwork Team

Participatory Commodity Networking

The farmer leader PAToT program had a primary purpose: to stimulate commodity networking by supporting emerging farmer communities in their efforts to build sustainable market access and industry-level representation. We ultimately designed all PAToT and PAR activities with participatory commodity networking (PCN) in mind. Emerging Rooibos groups have locally organized, and some have accessed organic and fairtrade certification. Many organizational, industry, and producer groups have joined to construct fairtrade cooperatives with the intention of forming long-term trade relations, and these preliminary efforts have met with laudable successes. At the same time, Rooibos market building has been fraught with conflict at all levels of analysis, and some of the emerging farmer groups have lost certification. This is not due to network failure but rather because growth has been rapid and patchy, while training has been incomplete. Yet emerging farmers want to participate in twenty-first century markets; they recognize the full potential of the bio-diverse lands in which they farm, but they have little money to invest, are not receiving fair payment for their crop, and are losing their youth to the cities. They have goals, but require access to training and small enterprise development funding so they may more effectively harness the opportunities that they have identified.

By investing in PCN, emerging farmers can work with industries and regulatory support organizations to develop learning webs where multilateral actors share knowledge and coordinate market growth. Technology is now at a stage where long-distance PIE and PAP is readily achievable, but effective networking requires stakeholders to transcend a number of ideological, logistical, and social blockages. This means integrating multiple groups and strategies, and that demands the willingness to operate in grey zones. Our efforts to generate

PCN were neither perfect nor complete, but they offer a tangible starting point, and the key lies in promoting linkages within a network space. As such, we developed a farmer leadership program to connect emerging Rooibos farmers with key individuals within the broader network. This process included carrying out formal commodity networking activities, in which we brought leaders into industry and organizational activities. We generated information exchange and emerging farmer support via commodity networking interviews, and actively connected the leaders to a core group of network actors in a policy seminar to stimulate broader PIE and set the stage for network PAP in subsequent project cycles.

When planning networking components, the project team realized the importance of maintaining a farmer-first focus. As such, I completed midterm fieldwork with farmer leaders before interviewing industry and organizational representatives. This strategy proved successful as it enabled me to: (1) learn about the industry from the perspective of the farmers, (2) use findings from community fieldwork to develop interview questions for industry and organizational experts, (3) revise my interview list based on farmer input, (4) include farmer leaders in interview planning, and (5) come to view expert interviews as a commodity networking tool, rather than as a mere data collection process.

In addition to the PCN activities that occurred during the PAToT sessions, the leaders began networking by attending SARC's AGM and related science day. This allowed them to meet a number of industry actors and to learn about Rooibos initiatives. The leaders expressed interest in SARC's efforts to develop viable organic Rooibos seedlings—as this is a major issue for all Rooibos farmers with organic certification—but found the presentation to be overly scientific and inaccessible. In later discussions with SARC, we explored collaborative potential in this area, and this may be a fruitful direction in future project cycles. The second major PCN

activity involved the leaders in UTZ training. The leaders gained insight into this certifier, and subsequently discussed possibilities for pursuing this certification program within their communities. Shortly after concluding midterm fieldwork, the leaders convened in Cape Town for FTSA's AGM and toured their second Rooibos processing facility where they discussed purchasing decisions, processing techniques and quality control before meeting with the General Manager who also manages the Right Rooibos Biodiversity Portfolio. We then reviewed research methods, and held sociopolitical training. This session covered pluralist, managerialist, and critical intersectionality perspectives, including definitions of each and an outline of their strengths and weaknesses, and we began reviewing fieldwork findings to explore next-step possibilities. Figure 3.8 displays a slide from this session.

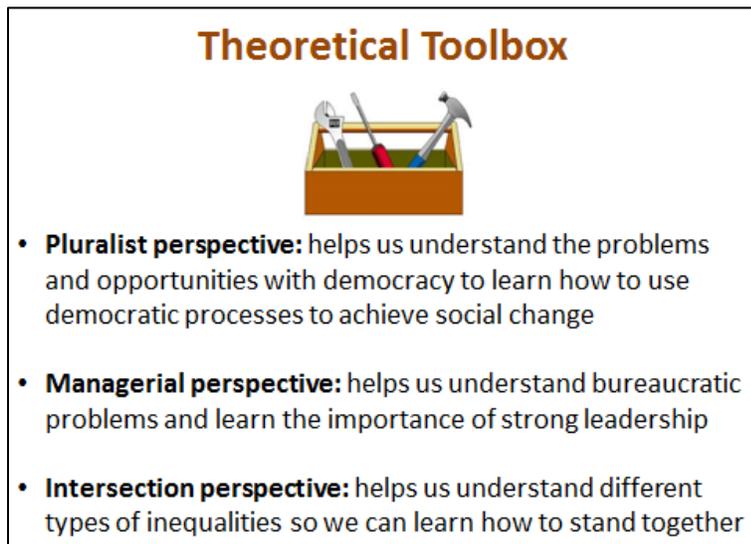


Figure 3.8: Sociopolitical PCNR Training

Leader involvement in the FTSA AGM was dynamic. While the farmer leaders were pleased to attend and were actively involved, some were upset that they could not cast votes

because their Rooibos organizations had been decertified and this engendered some internal difficulties. At the same time, most of the leaders networked with those they had met, and as they comprised nearly all of the emerging farmers present at the meeting, the leaders provided FTSA with critical insight during information gathering sessions. During deliberations, one industry actor stated that stakeholders must be able to participate in fairtrade if they are to achieve genuine empowerment. Leadership involvement at the AGM highlights this point: at the end of a Fairtrade Africa session, one of the female leaders thanked the facilitator for conducting break-out sessions in Afrikaans as well as in English as this enabled her to gain information, while also giving others the opportunity to listen to emerging farmers. The commercial farmers and traders present in the dialogue also expressed interest in emerging farmer concerns; thus despite the language barriers, positive information exchange did occur.

In the final project quarter, I conducted commodity networking interviews. These semi-structured interviews allowed me to expand upon the commodity network analysis begun by SKA. I conducted interviews with the following organizational groups (1) FLO-Cert, (2) SAFN, (3) BAWSI, and (4) EMG. I also met with the following industry groups: (1) SARC, (2) Fair Packers, (3) Rooibos Ltd. (4) Cape Natural Tea Products, (5) Kings Products, and (6) Right Rooibos. The findings from these interviews are detailed in Chapters Four and Five. These interviews covered a broad-range of groups, but these are by no means the only actors critical to the emerging Rooibos farmer network. Frankly, my purpose was not to compile a complete analysis, but rather to employ commodity network analysis as a networking strategy with those who were either centrally or peripherally involved in the project and/or core actors in the project communities. Whereas I had initially wished to interview a women's organization such as Sikhula Sonke union, these groups were more broadly focused within the hired-labor sector and

plans to include them never came to proper fruition. Finally, though I did not interview certain representatives, I did speak informally with relevant actors during broader commodity networking activities.

My academic interviewing goal was to extrapolate how network processes may be constraining and/or enabling emerging farmer engagement, and to identify opportunities for improvement. My project goal was to expand farmer leader support via information exchange. As such, I spent the first half of the interview asking a series of questions to gain information then shifted into conversational dialogue during the remainder of the meeting to share project information and deepen discussion of relevant themes. Note that it would have been both methodologically and programmatically ideal to involve the leaders in network interviews. With appropriate training, such a research team would have the capacity to interview a broader swath of network interest groups than I was able to do alone. Unfortunately, the one-year project timeframe did not allow for this. While I did not fully resolve this concern, I was aware of it, and strove to enhance participation in network interviews by asking by the leaders to share their ideas and suggest questions.

After completing the network interviews, the project team held a policy seminar at the University of the Western Cape to bring together a core group of network actors interested in emerging farmer concerns. At this time, the leaders presented fieldwork findings to industry and organizational experts, including fairtrade representatives, Rooibos processors, and relevant scholars. After formal presentations, the leaders engaged in break-out sessions with individual experts in order to discuss ongoing networking prospects. Future project cycles may involve this group to stimulate PAP and expand participation. Indeed, farmer leaders have more recently been working with the Rooibos Council to gain representation and now one leader resides on the

SARC board, with another leader operating as his deputy. Though both of these leaders are male, the group as a whole have stated an interest in maintaining equitable gender representation to ensure ongoing female involvement and this is occurring more locally, and informally.

Community Workshops and Evaluation Surveys

Final project activities were nearly entirely led by the farmer leaders. As previously discussed, during the third PAToT, the leader duos designed community workshops in order to transfer a portion of the knowledge that they had gained from their training. In developing this workshop, the leaders reviewed capabilities findings to ensure that their session would meet the stated interests and needs of their communities. While the leaders were completely responsible for organizing and conducting the workshop, SKA provided technical support by printing learner guides that the leaders developed and by working as leader assistants during the workshops. Following workshop completion, SKA went into the communities to provide an interactive survey training module with the farmer leaders in order to conduct project evaluation surveys. Similarly to midterm fieldwork, the leaders drew up research contracts, served as preliminary respondents, then fielded surveys with a sample of community members. As these surveys comprised the final component of our monitoring and evaluation strategy, we designed questions to determine leadership and community outcomes. The results were highly positive: farmer leaders ranked the project highly and community respondents felt the leaders had appropriately represented their communities. Of those surveyed, 100 percent felt the leaders had good knowledge of their workshop topics, 82 percent said the leaders had provided feedback on the training they had received, and 78 percent had received feedback on leader networking activities.

Not only did the respondents feel the leaders were able to effectively share what they learned, 65 percent said they would go to leaders for advice before approaching external experts.

It must be noted that survey findings may be somewhat biased as SKA facilitated the leader surveys and the leaders conducted the community surveys. We encouraged forthright responses but there is a possibility that respondents offered more positive feedback than they might have had the surveys been administered by a disinterested third-party. That said our overarching objectives were to achieve training outcomes and project evaluation leadership participation, thus methodological perfection represented a secondary consideration. It would be advisable to follow up on these evaluations in future project cycles in order to uncover long-term outcomes, but these findings suggest the success of the leadership PAToT program, and highlight the demonstrated ability of farmer leaders to manage industry and community information exchange.

Next Steps

Some aspects of this project were ideal: though many of us had not met prior to project inception, we comprised a flexible team with complementary strengths and we were all inspired by what we were attempting to achieve. Other aspects were challenging: many team members had in-depth experience with community building, technical training, and research, but conceptual integration was exploratory and it was often necessary to re-envision strategies during implementation. Flexibility is necessary in any PAR effort, and while problematic, it promotes participation. Our fast pace required regular communication and significantly more engagement than is typical for a one-year development project, yet it also meant that time and money were continually in short supply. We had optimally envisioned a multiyear project cycle, but failed to secure funding for this. This would have allowed us to deepen participation—including

involving the leaders in commodity networking interviews and bringing this core policy seminar network into Emerging Farmer Working Group development. We also had hoped to scale-up efforts by expanding into related groups or commodities—for example by linking commercial Rooibos farmers and emerging farmer leaders or by moving into related commodities such as the Protea cut-flower and tourism industries. Finally, it would have been ideal for the leaders to host a second farmer workshop to share critical fieldwork findings and develop community-based market-access action plans. Indeed, during final surveying, numerous leaders explicitly stated that they wished to conduct additional workshops with a view toward developing community action plans and this should be considered when developing future project cycles.

There are broader analysis and information dissemination opportunities as well. Not only did project monitoring include written information gleaned from learner workbooks, training reports, and participant observation fieldnotes, it also included audiovisual information in the form of photographs, videos, and audio recordings. This extensive database could be used to develop a documentary. When collecting such information, the project team conceived of future cycles in which we could employ audiovisual information in order to capture PAR processes and outcomes over time, and the wealth of procedural data that we collected could also comprise a book, in which a chapter would be devoted to M&E analysis. In future endeavors, a participant observation and/or documentary sub-team may capture action research processes to frame a story of collaborative development, and deepen our understanding of the multifaceted challenges and opportunities facing diverse actors who have joined to generate social change.

To conclude, whereas official engagement is complete, the project team has continued to work on project outcomes in various ways. Project practitioners are involving the leaders and their communities in ongoing activities while the scholars finalize data analysis and begin

publishing. Given the differing timeframes in which scholars and practitioners operate as well as the geographic distances separating the team, it is difficult to maintain ongoing cycles, but this less active period may merely be viewed as an extended period of reflection. As project actors form new teams, I hope that the leaders will continue to expand their leadership role. I also encourage the leaders to seek employment opportunities, either within the Rooibos network or as research and/or community development assistants for the groups involved in their communities. As emerging communities continue to engage in cooperative building, I would like to see leaders taking on managerial roles that will provide them with training opportunities in topics such as better agricultural practices and market activities as this would likewise help them expand upon their community trainer role. Finally, I hope that the leaders and SARC will continue to collaborate in order to institute a broader Emerging Farmer Working Group (EFWG) as this will provide communities with an official platform in which to negotiate interests, and enable the female leaders to maintain formal involvement. The project team has discussed the possibility for establishing an EFWG webpage within SARC's domain to enhance leadership recognition and stimulate further networking potential. By strengthening leadership, emerging Rooibos communities will be better equipped to engage in industry research and development prospects.

Whereas broader empowerment goals remain incomplete, the team has conducted a thorough investigation in order to generate a participatory network analysis of the emerging Rooibos community. The final set of baseline capabilities detailed at the end of this chapter represents a snapshot of the commodity network at the time of engagement. It offers a set of measures that may be used to longitudinally track Rooibos network challenges and opportunities, and it highlights the potential for lateral growth as future investigations may bring additional groups such as commercial farmers into this matrix. With this in mind, the incompleteness of this

table provides insight into future project opportunities. The table's SWOT-V structure also demonstrates the operational capacity of the PCNR approach to collect baseline information at multiple levels of analysis that may then be condensed into a format that stimulates participatory action analysis (PAA).

Not only will such an approach maximize participatory networking sustainability, it also provides a preliminary blueprint for scalability. The highly reflexive nature of PAR methodology hinders broader-scale applications, yet multiple project cycles may be used to scale up PAR investigations to encompass a growing range of commodity network actors. Indeed, the PAToT and PAR dimensions of one project cycle may generate baseline indicators that inform the development of broader PIE, and PAP activities in future cycles, with each cycle focused upon connecting less advantaged groups to critical networks of actors.

While PAR's reflexive nature likewise limits the potential for replicability, I have designed the PCNR framework to be flexible enough to encompass a broad range of individualized investigations. By viewing PCNR as a conceptual toolbox, researchers may add or eject particular theoretical or methodological components to suit the needs of specific projects while maintaining the integrity of the core PCNR approach outlined in Figure 3.3. For example, an investigation into a different commodity sector may develop its own set of baseline capabilities using the baseline framework below. Indeed, questions concerning PCNR sustainability and scalability represent critical avenues for future investigation and I plan to scale-up outcomes from this project by developing further Rooibos project cycles and/or testing and refining the approach in other commodity sectors and regions.

Table 3.10: Baseline Capabilities

Analysis	Emerging Communities	Farmer Leaders	Project	Commodity Network	Fair Markets
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Basic necessities ❖ Clean air ❖ Space to roam ❖ Community oriented ❖ Affordable health care ❖ Mutual support ❖ Low crime rates ❖ Local knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Dynamic/cohesive ★ Capabilities ★ Leadership ★ Communication ★ Solution-driven ★ Equality-minded ★ Hardworking ★ Confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CRSP Funding ▪ Partnership ▪ Teamwork ▪ Vision/strategies ▪ Multitasking ▪ Communication ▪ Coordination ▪ Serendipity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Geographically contained ♦ Value-addition ♦ Multilateral groups ♦ Umbrella networks ♦ Visionary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Advocacy ❖ Mainstreaming ❖ Sales growth ❖ Multiple regulatory strategies ❖ Conscious consumerism
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Technical knowledge ❖ Poverty ❖ Local stratification ❖ Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Varied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication ▪ Juggling work ▪ Over ambitious ▪ Short timeframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Inequality ♦ Communication ♦ Coordination ♦ Volatile prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Unilateralism ❖ Northern control ❖ Protectionism
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Community leadership ❖ Diverse perspectives ❖ Organizational restructuring ❖ Certification ❖ Democratization ❖ Technical support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ PAToT and PAR ★ Networking ★ Public speaking ★ Co-learning ★ PIE and PAP ★ Fundraising ★ Youth engagement ★ Representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capabilities ▪ Farmer oriented ▪ Momentum ▪ Industry support ▪ Lessons learned ▪ Sustainability and scalability ▪ Co-authorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Multilateral networking ♦ Value chain integration ♦ Democratic procedures ♦ Equity-oriented ♦ Farmer support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Markets ❖ Technology ❖ Capabilities ❖ Networking ❖ Approaches ❖ Core values ❖ Polycentric governance
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Structural inequalities ❖ Marginalization ❖ Minimal technology ❖ Bad roads ❖ No certification ❖ Rooibos conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Lack of resources ★ Short-lived project ★ Multiple responsibilities ★ Low payment ★ Rooibos conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Representation ▪ Rooibos conflict ▪ Learning curve ▪ Funding & time ▪ Micro-politics ▪ Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Monopolism ♦ Multiple audits ♦ Shifting buyers ♦ Export costs ♦ Bureaucracy ♦ Secrecy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Structural inequalities ❖ Rigidity ❖ Conflict ❖ Cooptation ❖ Dependency
Vision	Emerging farmer market access and industry representation; integrated value chain				

CHAPTER FOUR: FAIR MARKET NETWORKS

Introduction

This chapter broadly covers the topic of fair market governance to explore the prospects and pitfalls of global trade regulation, grounding analysis within the context of Rooibos tea. The global fair trade movement represents a loose coalition of producers, traders, consumers, and certifiers who are working to transform global markets by developing alternative standards and certifications (Raynolds et al. 2007). Challenging neoliberal forms of globalization, fair trade actors are implementing an alternative vision of globalization that is predicated upon the notion of voluntary trade regulation, and the movement remains vital after two decades of steady growth and diversification (Raynolds and Keahey 2013).

The movement works against the neoliberal market system by operating within global trade networks (Keahey et al. 2011), where it requires participating actors to meet a variety of socially just and environmentally responsible product standards (Raynolds and Keahey 2013). Fair traders must juggle numerous quality conventions in order to meet industrial and market demands, while remaining dedicated to the civic and domestic values central to fair trade philosophy (Murray and Raynolds 2007; Raynolds 2002a; Smith and Barrientos 2005). These dynamic tensions are driving market innovation, but efforts to integrate fair trade products within mainstream markets are exacerbating movement conflicts and threatening the involvement of fair trade's least-advantaged actors (Raynolds 2009; Raynolds and Keahey 2013; Renard 2005).

As this chapter demonstrates, the movement faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities. To promote broad-based unity, I argue that conflict resolution protocols should be

established in fair trade and related commodity networks. Given the recent trends described in this chapter, it is likely that fair market efforts will continue to diverge; thus differing governance groups must keep movement reputation in mind and collaborate to streamline services and ensure client adaptability. Indeed, actors at all levels may profit from movement expansion by recognizing difference as an opportunity for aligned action, rather than as a source of threat, and by strengthening their commitment to core movement values, fair traders may work together to address longstanding internal inequalities.

Via an integrated overview of local and global challenges, I begin by outlining the roles and responsibilities of fair trade organizations and networks relevant to South Africa's Rooibos tea sector. Rooibos actors are involved with Fairtrade International (FLO), which largely engages in agricultural commodities that follow the international system of product-certification.¹¹ Thus, I emphasize the FLO system in my analysis, but I also cover other fair trade groups due to research participant interest in these. After detailing fair trade dimensions, I discuss related environmental and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) efforts, exploring the intersecting considerations facing emerging fair market farmers. I conclude by noting the vitality of fair trade initiatives, but note that discordant management and inequitable functioning threaten potential for broad-based movement convergence. By adopting an integrated value-chain approach, fair traders may help develop and improve commodity network support mechanisms, further democratizing market governance.

The project team engaged participatory action research (PAR) to generate commodity networking. Commodity network analysis requires breadth, but PAR demands depth. This

¹¹ Fairtrade International (FLO) and Fair Trade USA (FTUSA) historically have aligned under a product-certification governance model, but in late 2011 FTUSA announced that would be leaving its international peers in order to pursue a different governance approach which will involve extending fair trade participation to large coffee estates, a commodity that has hitherto been restricted to smallholder production (Fair Trade USA 2011c).

tension resolved itself at the analytical level: PAR findings are not meant to be generalizable beyond participating groups (Marshall and Rossman 2011). As my academic purpose was to understand information from stakeholder perspectives, I programmatically used interviewing as a networking strategy. The information presented here may therefore be viewed as an analytic contextualization of the project arena. Given my focus on emerging producers, I did not conduct action research at the consumption-end of the value chain, though future project cycles may bring together a team of actors from across the network spectrum via face-to-face meetings and long-distance participatory information exchange and action planning (PIE and PAP) sessions. In terms of this present work, I have drawn from previous studies and dialogued with a Northern fair trade representative with global governance experience to discuss more recent movement concerns. Unless otherwise cited, information and direct quotes derive from the interviews listed below, or from presentations and discussions during networking events with farmer leaders.

Table 4.1: Organizational Interviews

Method	Fair Trade	Black Economic Empowerment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Trade South Africa • FLO-Cert¹² • Solidaridad • Southern African Fair Trade Network • Fairtrade Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Association of the Agriculture Sector • Sandra Kruger & Associates
		Environmental Groups
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Monitoring Group • Wild Rooibos Project

Fair Trade Growth

Table 4.2 demonstrates the increasing breadth and depth of the global movement which has become a multi-billion-dollar industry.

¹² Independent certification agency for fairtrade products

Table 4.2: Growth of a Global Movement: Fairtrade Certified Sales in Major and Emerging Economies (US\$ 1,000)*

Analysis	Countries by Region	2005	2007	2009	Average Annual Growth Rate 2005-09
	Europe	\$812,546	\$1,802,174	\$2,495,076	52%
	UK	344,588	965,666	1,250,409	66%
	France	135,819	287,931	400,970	49%
	Switzerland	166,568	216,771	251,053	13%
	Germany	88,263	194,285	372,724	81%
	Austria	31,869	72,394	100,332	54%
	Netherlands	45,439	65,127	119,588	41%
	Eastern Europe	--	--	\$948	--
	Czech Republic	--	--	400	--
	Lithuania	--	--	226	--
	Estonia	--	--	212	--
	Latvia	--	--	110	--
	North America	\$471,693	\$1,111,140	\$1,467,887	53%
	USA	428,370	1,002,000	1,186,431	44%
	Canada	43,323	109,140	281,456	137%
	Pacific Rim	\$7,345	\$23,309	\$55,764	165%
	Australia/NZ	3,112	14,808	40,041	297%
	Japan	4,233	8,501	15,723	68%
	Africa	--	--	\$330	--
	South Africa	--	--	\$330	--
	Global Totals**	\$1,409,762	\$3,264,589	\$4,729,800	59%

Sources: (FLO-I 2007b; FLO-I 2008; FLO-I 2011b; Adapted from CFAT 2011)

Notes:

* Euro to dollar currency conversion via U.S. Federal Reserve 2009 average annual exchange rate (Federal Reserve System 2011).

** Total includes countries not listed above.

Civic and religious interest groups have sought to regulate global markets since the mid-twentieth century by instituting voluntary standards and certifications in niche commodities such

as coffee and handicrafts, but early efforts were nascent and largely limited to small shops (Littrell and Dickson 1999; Raynolds and Long 2007; Wilhoit 2005). Within the past two decades, movement actors have sought to enter mainstream markets and the growing body of consciously minded consumers has stimulated rapid growth and product differentiation within the global movement. Fair trade bodies now govern a range of goods, including agricultural, handicraft, and tourism products (Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa 2011; Raynolds and Long 2007). In recent years, soccer balls and apparel have facilitated fair trade entry into industrial manufacture, gold labeling has sparked fair-mining, and FairWild certification has been piloted with wild harvested goods (DeCoursey 2011; Fair Trade USA 2011a; Fairtrade International 2011b; Fairtrade International 2011f). These markets promote living wages, ethical labor conditions, and small enterprise development; and a growing force of conscious consumers are actively supporting fair trading practices (Conroy 2007; Murray and Raynolds 2007; Nicholls and Opal 2005; Shaw 2005).

As Tables 4.2 and 4.3 demonstrate, fairtrade certified sales are expanding, with goods moving into emerging Eastern European and Southern markets. In 2001, Mexico developed a FLO-affiliated 'Comercio Justo' coffee label for domestic consumption (BTC Trade for Development 2010). South Africa subsequently worked with FLO to launch domestic sales via Fairtrade Label South Africa in 2009, and Brazil, India, and Kenya now are initiating domestic fairtrade standards as well. With Eastern European countries opening up domestic fairtrade markets, non-traditional emerging economies are merging with traditional fairtrade markets to maximize trade potential and transform global market practices (Fairtrade International 2011a; Raynolds and Keahey 2009).

Table 4.3: Sales Volumes of Top Fairtrade Labeled Commodities 2001-2009 (metric tons)

Analysis	Commodity	2001	2005	2009	Average Annual Growth Rate 2001-09
	Coffee	14,388	33,992	73,781	52%
	Tea	1,085	2,614	11,524	120%
	Cocoa	1,453	5,657	13,898	107%
	Sugar	468	3,163	89,628	2381%
	Bananas	29,072	103,877	311,465	121%
	Other Fresh Fruit/Juices	966	13,145	65,673	837%
	Total*	48,648	168,076	575,620	135%

Sources: (FLO-I 2004; FLO-I 2006; FLO-I 2008; FLO-I 2009; FLO-I 2011b: Adapted from CFAT 2011)

Notes:

* Includes other labeled commodities measured by weight (e.g. rice and honey), but not those measured by item or volume (e.g. flowers, cotton, sports balls, wine, and beer).

FLO-based fairtrade originated in the context of Latin American social justice efforts. In 1973, the Dutch-based Fair Trade Organisatie launched solidarity coffee in European markets to provide disadvantaged Latin American producers with a supportive buyer and consumer base and early fairtrade growth occurred in tandem with smallholder coffee cooperatives (Fridell 2007b; Low and Davenport 2005b). In contrast, African efforts have largely occurred in the hired-labor sector as groups operating in this region sought to harness certified markets to achieve fair labor and national development objectives. Indeed, South Africans have helped to expand fairtrade entry into hired labor estates by aligning national BBBEE protocols with FLO standards to address entrenched racial inequalities in agriculture (Kruger and du Toit 2007).

Africa is increasingly important to global fairtrade development, with a growing number of countries actively engaged in fairtrade certified production. Table 4.4 delineates the diversity of Africa's FLO producer countries. Though these achievements are promising, much of Africa's fairtrade growth is rapid and recent: continental fairtrade certified producer groups increased by 43 percent from 2007 to 2010 (Fairtrade Africa 2011c; Raynolds and Keahey 2009).

Table 4.4: Fairtrade Certified Production Countries by Region 2011

Analysis	Africa and Middle East	Asia	Latin America
Totals	29	12	23
	Benin Burkina Faso Cameroon Comoros Cote d'Ivoire Dem. Republic Congo Egypt Ethiopia Ghana Kenya Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritius Morocco Mozambique Palestine Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Sierra Leone South Africa Swaziland Tanzania Togo Tunisia Uganda Zambia Zimbabwe	China Fiji India Indonesia Kyrgyzstan Laos Pakistan Papua New Guinea Philippines Sri Lanka Thailand Vietnam	Argentina Belize Bolivia Brazil Chile Colombia Costa Rica Cuba Dominican Republic Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Guyana Haiti Honduras Mexico Nicaragua Panama Paraguay Peru Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Uruguay

Source: (FLO-Cert 2011b)

African fairtraders supply numerous certified products and the continent is a major supplier of many non-traditional fairtrade products, with the most explosive new-product growth occurring in the herbs and spices. Fruit farmers represent the largest producer body in terms of sheer numbers, and these cultivate a variety of produce, from temperate apples and blueberries to citrus and other tropical selections (FLO-Cert 2011b; Raynolds and Keahey 2009; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010).

Table 4.5: Fairtrade Certified Producer Organizations in Africa

Analysis	Commodity Grouping	2005	2011
	Banana	1	2
	Cane Sugar	1	33
	Cocoa	4	19
	Coffee	33	39
	Dried Fruit	5	20
	Flowers and Plants	13	36
	Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	40	108
	Fruit Juice	2	19
	Herbs and Spices	2	37
	Honey	1	3
	Nuts and Oilseed	5	24
	Rice	1	4
	Seed Cotton	4	14
	Tea	17	56
	Wine Grapes	22	17
	Total	150	431

Source: (FLO-Cert 2005; FLO-Cert 2011b; Raynolds and Keahey 2009).

Notes:

* The wine sector shows a decline due to recent consolidation: 11 growers supplying the Dutoitskloof Cellar have amalgamated into one multi-estate certificate. In real terms, there has been a growth of six certified producer groups.

Connected to rising global demand, FLO entrance into tea and herbal tea has stimulated the growth of African fairtrade certified groups producing chamomile, hibiscus, mint, and tea. In contrast, South African fairtrade tea production remains almost entirely in Rooibos, which is uniquely cultivated in the Western Cape Province. Rooibos traders are likewise concentrated in South Africa, as well as in intermediary and receiving countries in Europe, India, North America, and Sri Lanka (FLO-Cert 2011b).

Table 4.6: African Fairtrade Certified Tea and Herbal Tea Producer Organizations 2007-2011

Analysis	Countries	2007 Producer Organizations	2011 Producer Organizations	Types of Tea Produced
	Egypt	--	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile • Hibiscus • Mint
	Kenya	16	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile • Tea
	Malawi	2	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile • Tea
	Rwanda	--	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile
	Senegal	--	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea
	South Africa	6	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooibos • Tea
	Tanzania	7	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile • Mint • Tea
	Uganda	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamomile • Tea
	Burkina Faso	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hibiscus
	Total	36	48	

Sources: (FLO-Cert 2011b; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010)

There are currently four smallholder groups operating in South Africa's fairtrade system. Three of these are Rooibos producers, and the fourth is the Eksteenskuil Agricultural Cooperative, the sole South African producer of fairtrade raisins (FLO-Cert 2011b). FLO has

developed both small farmer and hired-labor standards for tea in general, and as it has classified Rooibos as a tea rather than as an herb, smallholders must compete with commercial estates. While much of the smallholder tea is recognized to be of higher quality, due to the climatic conditions in which it is grown, Rooibos estates have better infrastructure and operate on larger tracts of land, and these privileges enable commercial farmers to more efficiently meet industrial and market conventions.

Table 4.7: South African Fairtrade Certified Rooibos Producers and Traders

Analysis	Small Farmer Groups	Hired-Labor Estates	Traders
	Driefontein Heiveld Wupperthal Original	Bergendal Boerdery Erfdeel Farming Trust Mouton Citrus Weidouw Estate	Cape Natural Tea Products Carmien Tea Coetzee & Coetzee I & M Smith Khoisan Tea Rooibos Ltd.

Source: (FLO-Cert 2011b)

Fairtrade tea development required an in-depth investigation into tea pricing concerns; thus FLO did not introduce minimum pricing requirements until 2008 when it set minimum per-kilo prices for Rooibos small producer organizations at US\$3.93, with a US\$.66 social premium (30/5 ZAR). Hired-labor estates receive the same amount, albeit with a lower floor price and higher premium to serve FLO's farm laborer constituents (FLO-I 2007a; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). Tea prices have recently risen to high market levels, but this has not translated into producer profit. Rising agricultural input and living costs mean that absolute prices are similar to those in the 1980s (Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010), when protectionist trade policies shielded monopolies from competition in certain sectors, while structural adjustment programs enforced trade liberalization in others. Today, climate change is of additional relevance to tea

producers because of this crop's susceptibility to drought cycles and desertification, and less advantaged groups tend to live in fragile areas.

Rooibos specifically faces these challenges, and market volatility in other South African commodities can impact Rooibos production. According to my Rooibos industry informants, the market plunged in 2006 and 2007 due to a crop glut in part wrought by wheat farmers who shifted land over to Rooibos production to capture its high prices. Fairtrade participation does not entirely buffer producers from market turbulence, but it can generate turbulence of its own. As Chapter Five discusses, emerging Rooibos production rapidly increased in response to fairtrade certification and the resulting oversupply resulted in managerial crisis.

Yet despite these difficulties, fairtrade does provide producers with a measure of stability, as well as access to social premiums and professional development opportunities. Dual organic certification may likewise help farmers profit from reduced input dependency, though fuel and transport costs are steep. FLO has joined with groups in Eastern Africa to help producers address climate change impacts on tea farming, and similar efforts may be conducted within South African Rooibos. Ongoing growth in sales volumes and consumer demand make such long-term investments possible while providing producers with a more secure livelihood from which they may respond to deeper challenges (Bacon 2005; FLO-I 2007a; Reynolds and Ngcwangu 2010).

South African fairtrade involvement has been particularly dynamic: national fair traders have been active in linking fair trade participation with national development efforts, and in 2009, the country launched a domestic market for certified products, with supermarkets beginning to absorb FLO-certified goods such as coffee, wine, and sugar. In its first year, domestic fairtrade generated approximately \$330,000¹³, and in 2010 domestic sales totaled \$2.5

¹³ EUR 458,075, with currency conversion via U.S. Federal Reserve 2009 annual exchange rate.

million¹⁴, more than tripling 2009 sales estimates. (Fairtrade International 2011a; FLO-I 2011b; FTSA 2011). Production growth is continuing as well, though almost entirely within the hired-labor sector (Raynolds and Keahey 2009; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). South African fairtraders currently consist of 83 registered traders and 87 producers operating in multiple commodities, with growth concentrated in fresh fruit.

Table 4.8: Fairtrade Certified Producer Organizations in South Africa

Analysis	Tea	Fresh Fruit*	Fruit Juice	Wine	Dried Fruit	Total
2005	5	22	2	22	1	52
2011	7	58	4	17	1	87

Sources: (FLO-Cert 2005; FLO-Cert 2011b; Raynolds and Keahey 2009)

Notes:

* Does not include banana.

** The wine sector shows a decline due to recent consolidation: 11 individual growers supplying to the Dutoitskloof Cellar have now amalgamated into one multi-estate certificate. In real terms, there has been a growth of six certified producer groups.

Finally, South Africans have broadened movement engagement. Fair trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) has pioneered standards within the tourism sector, and local shops offer fairly traded handicrafts to support community development initiatives (Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa 2011; Fairtrade International 2011a). As members of the only nation that possesses both a domestic sales label and a tourism seal, while also producing fair trade agricultural and

¹⁴ ZAR 18.4 million, with currency conversion via U.S. Federal Reserve 2010 annual exchange rate.

handicraft goods, South Africans have noted the massive potential for broad-based convergence. Activists are working with regional, continental, and global groups to align markets.

Fair Trade Organizations

Fair trade agents have generated multiple third-party governance approaches to manage different commodity groupings via social and environmental standards. Figure 4.1 illustrates the primary groups operating in South Africa, the African continent, and globally.

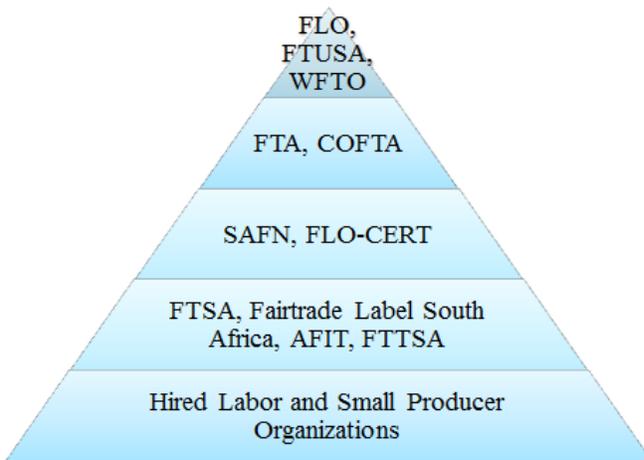


Figure 4.1: Multilateral Fair Trade Networks¹⁵

In theory, core movement values unite diverse group efforts into a fairly cohesive regulatory fair market system, but in practice, numerous governance challenges are threatening the movement (Taylor et al. 2005). At the level of global governance, fair trade organizations are divided over the question of hired-labor participation, and many are concerned that the increased

¹⁵ The full spelling of these organizations are as follows: Fairtrade International (FLO), Fair Trade USA (FTUSA), World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), Fairtrade Africa (FTA), Cooperation for Fair Trade in Africa (COFTA), Southern African Fair Trade Network (SAFN), Fairtrade South Africa (FTSA), Association for Fairness in Trade (AFIT), and Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA).

involvement of hired labor estates is threatening the ability of less-advantaged smallholders to effectively compete in certified markets (Bezençon and Blili 2006; Murray and Reynolds 2007; Renard 2005). At the organizational level, the rapid proliferation of new FLO standards requires ongoing bureaucratic restructuring, but my research shows that new product growth may be outpacing training and support capacity. Such rapid growth may be exacerbating local tensions as producers struggle to manage fair trade certification without appropriate levels of support and training. Indeed, deeply embedded structural inequalities may be hindering the ability of small farmers and farm laborers to equitably participate in the system that regulates their livelihoods.

My Rooibos research sheds light into the challenges facing the fair trade movement in a variety of ways. Not only are emerging farmers operating within a system of which many have little knowledge, they are struggling to transcend decades of Apartheid. Within the context of South African fairtrade, FLO's producer designation system may engender de facto racial segregation as it separates producers into smallholder and hired-labor standards. While the system is designed to meet the different requirements of smallholder and hired labor groups, in reality, emerging farmers of color may be marginalized as smallholders while White-owned commercial farms dominate production.

Despite these challenges, the movement as a whole offers a great deal of opportunity to participating actors. Southern entities have focused on instituting national and community development initiatives and Southern actors have been increasingly instrumental in shaping the broader movement (Kruger and du Toit 2007; Wilkinson and Mascarenhas 2007). As gender and race considerations become more visible within the movement, fair trade actors may more effectively address social justice challenges and harness multicultural opportunities.

FLO-based Organizations

More commonly known as FLO, Fairtrade International is the non-profit standard-setting body that owns the international fairtrade label. While its organizational structure is centralized in Bonn, it maintains Board membership from different regions to include labeling members, traders, producer organizations, and external experts in decision making processes (Fairtrade International 2011c). FLO also works with local fairtrade groups to support producers, and manages a producer certification fund for smallholder producers. While this grant is not intended to cover all inspection expenses, producer groups may apply for and receive funds up to two times to help defray the technical costs of membership (Fairtrade International 2011e).

FLO-Cert is independent from FLO, and formed in 2003 to manage certification for the international fairtrade network. Operating as a for-profit company exclusively funded by certification fees, it audits organizations to ensure compliance with FLO standards. As a product certifier, this group represents approximately 2000 clients in over 70 countries, thus impacting more than one million farmers and farm laborers (FLO-Cert 2011a). Similarly to FLO, company headquarters are located in Bonn, but the company currently maintains branch offices in Costa Rica, India, and South Africa. Its Cape Town office provides pre-assessment services, audits, and certification for southern African producers and traders interested in fairtrade standards. Staff manages certification and presents fairtrade information to governmental, non-governmental, and farmer groups. Whereas FLO maintains a centralized governance approach, FLO-Cert states that it is pursuing decentralization to service customers as locally as possible.

FLO-Cert is focused on expanding services and information provision. It has developed an electronic certification data base, titled SCORE, to streamline compliance (FLO-Cert 2010). The system was rolled out within small farmer standards in late 2011. It enables web-based

certification, and has been designed to give producers greater compliance control. SCORE reduces minimum requirements to core points: for example, the 600 points in small farmer standards have been reduced to 100 core requirements. Whereas core practices remain the same, the bureaucratic system has changed. FLO-Cert hopes these changes will empower producers as they determine their own development plan to take greater ownership of the inspection process. The system will enable members to select the criteria in which they wish to comply and the timeframe for doing so. While this system may simplify bureaucratic details and give producers greater control, implementation is nascent and efficacy has yet to be determined.

Aligned with FLO, Fair Trade South Africa (FTSA) is the umbrella organization for domestic fair trade groups and a central national figure (FTSA 2009). Primarily funded by Europeans, FTSA engages most closely with European labeling organizations and buyers but maintains relations with groups throughout the world. According to an FTSA informant, the group outlined an ambitious set of objectives when it was formed in 2005. These included: (1) promoting domestic fairtrade labeling, (2) developing national markets for fairtrade products, (3) liaising with larger bodies, (4) raising and managing beneficiary funds, (5) promoting producer socioeconomic development, and (6) providing certified producer support. FTSA devoted its first five years to expanding operations and instituting a domestic label by forming Fairtrade Label South Africa. As part of its expansion, it has strengthened collaboration with multiple fair trade organizations, including Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA), Association for Fairness in Trade (AFIT), the Cooperation for Fair Trade in Africa (COFTA), and Fairtrade Africa (FTA).

National labeling and domestic market objectives remain central to FTSA's direction. The group launched a local labeling initiative in 2009, and worked with the wine industry to

implement a fairtrade promotion campaign in 2010. It has additionally instituted a volunteer program to develop domestic awareness and recently won an award for best South/South fairtrade initiative for this. While luxury supermarkets, such as Woolworths, have resisted fairtrade entry in favor of developing their own ethical lines; mainstream supermarkets such as Pick n' Pay have expressed commitment to stocking fairtrade products, and fairtraders are initiating continental trading arrangements to bring African-sourced products into domestic supermarkets (FTSA 2010). Given this rapid growth, South Africa is actively enforcing label protection to prevent unscrupulous usage and ensure label reliability.

FTSA is working closely with the Southern African Fair Trade Network (SAFN) and FTA to develop regional trade and producer networking. In its 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the organization recognized ongoing issues concerning producer support and sought to clarify hazy 2005 objectives to redefine their approach. In contrast, SAFN's primary work is in this domain. According to my SAFN informant, the group is equipped to manage producer concerns, leaving FTSA free to focus on advocacy and market growth. Institutionalized in 2007, SAFN's purpose is to support fairtrade producers and to link groups to one another via regional network building. The group manages producer technical assistance funds, and is strengthening delivery. In South Africa, SAFN cooperates with multiple organizations on labor and producer support issues, maintaining governmental and non-governmental connections. Objectives include facilitating movement cooperation, information-exchange, producer training provision, and educational networking. SAFN primarily operates within the hired-labor sector, but is committed to providing emerging farmers with market-access platforms, both nationally and regionally. To construct regional networks, it works in multiple countries and diverse commodity sectors, from vanilla in Madagascar to sugar in Malawi. SAFN is developing farmer research and information

sharing platforms so that producer groups may share practices and address equality concerns. In terms of Rooibos, it has expressed interest in working with fairtrade growers to address market-access constraints.

Continentially, SAFN collaborates with FTA, another relatively young organization formerly known as the African Fairtrade Network. Based in Nairobi, the FTA maintains a Board which is elected by the General Assembly, the organization's highest decision-making body. It operates in conjunction with FLO with whom it has collaborated in developing a Joint Africa plan (Fairtrade International 2011a). FTA supports broader fair trade activities as well, and governance is democratic and pan-Africanist. It encourages the incorporation of indigenous items, such as marula and baobab oil into new product development and recent producer-initiated efforts have led FLO to institute new standards for these items (Fairtrade International 2011a).

FTA seeks culturally-grounded solutions for African concerns, communicating regional debates to global bodies. It is positioning to develop regional trade arrangements with multiple governments. As part of this process, it has been instituting regional networks, including SAFN, to ensure greater producer representation. Along with its affiliated networks, FTA maintains a client-based approach to producer support, arguing that farmers are business entrepreneurs rather than beneficiaries. It has pursued innovative solutions to training demands: for example, by including United States Peace Corps volunteers in producer capacity building. With regional networks now functioning, FTA is prioritizing continental trade development.

More generally, African FLO actors are convening to shorten the value chain via continental trade development, and groups are developing domestic fairtrade in Latin America and Asia as well, offering the promise of South/South trading arrangements (Raynolds and Keahey 2009). Fairtraders have recently secured business arrangements to introduce Ghanaian

fairtrade chocolate into South African markets (Fairtrade Africa 2011a). Although African actors have accomplished a great deal in a short period of time, regional trade formation is no small matter, for this necessarily entails restructuring patterns that have been set since the colonial era. In AGM discussions, fairtraders noted numerous bureaucratic, political, and social difficulties to continental trade development, including high tariffs, lack of adequate infrastructure, shipment delays, and lack of demand. Fairtrade organizations are seeking to pragmatically address these issues by expanding regional and national-level support networks, streamlining advocacy, and negotiating trade initiatives with various national governments.

Broader Fair Trade Organizations

In 2004, African producers established the Cooperation for Fair Trade in Africa (COFTA) to expand the networking capacity of broader fair trade groups (COFTA 2011). This organization currently comprises member producer organizations in more than 20 countries, including South Africa where it shares office space with fairtrade sister organization SAFN. As a fair trade regional network, it plays a similar role by supporting fair trade market access for marginalized producers and it engages extensively in broader fair trade advocacy. It is organizationally aligned with WFTO. Historically focused on handicrafts, these groups have begun to move into food commodities: although most COFTA members are handicraft producers, this organization recognizes that entrepreneurs operate in diverse, yet interconnected income-generation activities; thus it works with some agricultural groups (COFTA 2011). Similarly, agriculture-based FLO now offers standards for non-food items such as sports balls, gold, and timber (Fairtrade International 2011f; FLO-Cert 2011b).

WFTO and FLO continue to differ greatly in terms of governance. FLO employs a market-oriented labeling system to certify production and link producers to mainstream markets at fairtrade prices. WFTO is striving to develop a sustainable fair trade economy by demanding total commodity chain commitment. Its logo has been designed to brand businesses and retailers that demonstrate 100 percent organizational commitment to fair trade values. (WFTO 2011b). To better support the small and disadvantaged producers with whom it chooses to exclusively work, the organization uses a Sustainable Fair Trade Management System (SFTMS) label to cater to groups operating outside of the FLO system (Keahey et al. 2011; WFTO 2011b).

The South African fair trade movement transcends handicraft and agricultural arenas. In 2004, Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) formed to offer socially responsible tourism. Similar to other fair trade systems, it employs a voluntary certification program focused on awareness-raising, capacity building, and training. It certifies multiple tourism products including accommodation, guided activities, attractions, and volunteer tourism. The process includes standards in 16 areas, including labor standards, ownership and control, workplace health and safety, cultural sensitivity, environmental management, HIV/AIDS awareness, and skills development (Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa 2010). During the 2010 FTSA AGM, FTTSA highlighted multiple opportunities for broad-based fair market alignment, arguing that South Africa maintains a unique position within the global movement because it offers domestic fairtrade as well as fair trade tourism services. FTTSA expressed interest in introducing fairtrade wine and fair trade handicrafts into its certified hotels and noted other opportunities, including joint promotions and the development of fairtrade farm tourism. Finally, the recent advent of a FairWild label may be of interest to emerging Rooibos producers who harvest wild tea and wish to profit from this premium commodity (DeCoursey 2011).

Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment

The South African government instituted Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies in 2001 to address ongoing racial inequality stemming from decades of colonialism and Apartheid (AgriBEE 2005; Kruger and du Toit 2007). This act prioritizes worker empowerment to achieve demographic representation of historically marginalized groups, but agricultural industries have remained highly exploitative. BEE's entrance into the wine industry initially accomplished little in terms of racial diversification, with critics claiming that it merely facilitated elite partnerships thereby reinforcing farmworker marginalization (Bek et al. 2007; du Toit et al. 2008). The government has since developed comprehensive Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) standards to strengthen commitment. Current legislation requires companies to follow eight codes of good practice. These address equality issues in ownership, management and control, employment equity, skills development, preferential procurement, enterprise development, socioeconomic development, and qualifying small enterprises. Codes engage a scorecard system whereby companies rank performance and set compliance targets. Broader empowerment efforts include strategic focus on the development of smallholder cooperatives and women-owned businesses (Department of Trade and Industry 2009; Department of Trade and Industry 2011).

BBBEE efforts remain highly problematic. Indeed, "making sense of 'Black Economic Empowerment' initiatives in the context of rampant unemployment and continued labor exploitation in South Africa is not straightforward" (Richey and Ponte 2011). Despite the existence of legal codes, companies continue to evade compliance as the government lacks monitoring capacity. Yet both scholars and practitioners have noted the synergies between fairtrade and governmental BBBEE policies. With its well-established auditing system, FLO has

formally integrated BBBEE requirements into South African hired-labor standards. While controversial, this move highlighted global movement potential by demonstrating its capacity for national-level regulatory alignment (Kruger and du Toit 2007; McEwan and Bek 2009). This connection has helped stimulate the rapid growth of fairtrade hired-labor production, but BBBEE protocols are difficult to meet as participants must demonstrate steps toward Black ownership. Entrenched power relations represent a serious challenge in terms of future market expansion: some are concerned that BBBEE protocols may place barriers to fairtrade growth. Current restrictions may be limiting FLO citrus production capacity, hindering the ability of European supermarkets to launch this item. This issue demonstrates the difficulty of integrating civic conventions with industrial and market demands, and may illustrate the persistence of corporate dominance within fairtrade commodity networks (Renard 2003).

In theory, BBBEE codes are designed to facilitate equitable commercial redistribution, but in practice, they have yet to significantly shift land and/or managerial ownership to marginalized groups. Fairtrade involvement was initially pursued to stimulate this process, but it remains unclear whether the movement will continue to do so. Relaxing BBBEE restrictions may satisfy buyers by enhancing industrial supply, but it will also relegate farm laborers into ongoing servitude, reinforcing de facto marginalization. Fairtrade labor conditions may be more favorable than those found during Apartheid, or in comparison with South Africa's broader agricultural sector, where the infamous 'dop' system of 'paying' laborers in alcohol persists (Smith 2011), but the movement must be careful not to replicate inequalities simply to satisfy industrial and market conventions, for fair trade's reputation is what makes the movement strong.

Within the hired-labor farm sector, BBBEE policies support farmworkers in developing managerial and ownership capacity. Emerging farmers who have successfully commercialized

may take part in BBBEE, but the majority of this group consists of independent smallholders. Certain needs correspond. Similarly to farmworkers, many emerging farmers do not own the land they cultivate and most lack access to the amount of land necessary for commercial production. Both groups require technical and market training, credit and investment access, and equitable industry representation. Yet smallholders are increasingly members of community cooperatives; thus question of ownership and managerial process differs from that of farmworkers, where BBBEE involvement has been prioritized. The potential for racial empowerment in the both the hired labor and smallholder sectors remain unclear, but BEE and related labor precepts appear to be entering the smallholder arena more informally. The Black Association of the Agricultural Sector (BAWSI) has become involved in Wuppertal via a smallholder 'BEE tea' campaign. According to my BAWSI respondent, "BEE is often misunderstood. People think it is about buying Whites out of business. For us it is about Blacks buying into business".

Previously known as the Black Association of the Wine and Spirit Industry, BAWSI was instituted by ex-trade unionists and BEE entrepreneurs as a response to the Apartheid-era wine monopoly. It continues to maintain an oppositional stance to mainstream commodity networks and the organization's primary goal is in transforming South African agriculture to reflect demographic equality. To accomplish this, it pursues class-action lawsuits and works directly with farmers to build management capacity. BAWSI states that it has incorporated PAR precepts into its training structures via outreach and educational involvement. Though the organization secures external funds to send farmers to technical production training, the BAWSI Trust is the primary funding source. BAWSI fills this trust by commercially investing in its projects as a means for generating ongoing revenue for political engagement.

BAWSI initially helped institute and fund 7 Peas, an independent Rooibos tea business. In doing so, it generated the support of 97 Wupperthal producers who had been members of the troubled Small Farmers Cooperative and appointed two Emerging Farmer Directors from this group, one male and one female. According to farmer members, 7 Peas bought their tea at prevailing market prices, picked up the tea within the area, and provided full payment at time of transfer. BAWSI states that it has subsequently liquidated 7 Peas due to financial mismanagement and is now developing a new firm with the strategy of branding smallholder tea and the organization has maintained support in a number of the more geographically accessible Wupperthal communities. Politically, it has worked with members to develop legal action against the Small Farmers Cooperative for non-payment. BAWSI's stated goal in this endeavor was to help farmers lay claim to the cooperative by restructuring its board and staff although legal action ultimately led to cooperative termination and liquidation. While the Rooibos industry and broader fairtrade networks view BAWSI as a radical and potentially destructive force, the group has nevertheless consolidated its position within the emerging tea sector and will likely remain a central player.

Environmental Involvement

The Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) formed in the heady political thaw of the early 1990s where it emerged as an environmental policy think tank (EMG 2011). My EMG informants detailed this group's history for this research. During EMG's early years, vibrant discussions were occurring in Cape Town's academic environment, and various groups were seeking to influence post-Apartheid changes by engineering sustainable development protocols. In the late 1990s, EMG examined environmental mining impacts to inform a review of the

national mining act. It raised funds and developed an information campaign road show to visit mining communities throughout the country. By connecting mining communities to one another via national workshops, the group generated environmental impact findings and strengthened community engagement, informing mining policy reform. EMG's organizational role has since evolved toward opening political access to underrepresented communities that face environmental concerns, and it covers transportation costs for marginalized groups.

After attending a desertification convention in 1999, EMG became involved with emerging Rooibos communities and fairtrade. Since then, the group has provided training to emerging farmers in the southern Bokkeveld and Wupperthal, and it was a central actor in the Fair Packers business initiative. Although EMG no longer engages with Wupperthal communities due to cross-cutting conflicts, it continues to assist members of the southern Bokkeveld-based Heiveld Cooperative, where it maintains an office in Nieuwoudtville. It recently supported the Heiveld in building a new tea processing facility, including a tea court and storage barn, and a local representative regularly travels with cooperative members to international events. EMG has extended its fairtrade involvement beyond Rooibos as well. Not only is it active within numerous fairtrade organizations, it is working with a Griqua fairtrade Honeybush community.

My EMG research informants state that their group does not emphasize issues; rather EMG's approach is to address the dysfunctional power relationships that engender ecological decline. As it argues, emerging farmers have largely engaged in Rooibos production as a survival strategy. Historically disadvantaged Rooibos producers live in a fragile environment with a high biodiversity value; thus EMG began involvement by prioritizing socioeconomic engagement. The group states that communities require economic and political capital if they are to transform

their environmental engagement from a position of exploitation to one of sustainable management. Once farmers access lucrative markets, they may work with organizations to address environmental and conservation concerns. Producers require recordkeeping and marketing skills before they can begin to work on biodiversity; thus training efforts must be pragmatic and develop over time. EMG notes that Heiveld cooperative building has required intensive investment, but states that the group is moving away from direct support and refocusing action in terms of community, research, and industry outreach. It has linked the Heiveld to the Department of Tourism which is developing a Rooibos tourism route along the same lines as the Cape's wine routes.

Research goals include linking Rooibos farmers to scientists working on environmental and conservation issues, though it has eschewed involvement with SARC's organic seedling research in favor of conducting its own studies with Heiveld members, which involves local farmer knowledge and leadership. During an exploratory community visit, we met with an energetic and highly knowledgeable woman who showed us her Rooibos test plot. Essentially, she was collecting wild Rooibos seedlings and growing them alongside cultivated varieties to measure and compare their performance over time, but she stated that her research was stymied due to the lack of a sufficient community water supply. Indeed, the southern Bokkeveld plains are more arid than the mountainous Wupperthal region further south.

Wild Rooibos is of central interest to EMG, which recently collaborated with a conservation ecologist to examine optimum harvest yields and develop a sustainable management plan for this burgeoning commodity (Malgas and Oettle 2007). The primary researcher grew up in a Moravian Church community in the Overberg and has professionally focused on integrating PAR processes within ecological research to integrate local farmer

knowledge and scientific examination. She facilitated wild Rooibos population surveys with elderly local experts and community members in the southern Bokkeveld and Wupperthal regions to map wild Rooibos and determine sustainable wild harvest practices. According to this scholar, scientists may more effectively retrieve local ecological knowledge by conducting research with those who have maintained a historical relationship with the land. Wild Rooibos developments are promising, but Wupperthal lacks the capacity to separate wild from cultivated harvests, and bureaucratic considerations regarding Church land ownership as well as the lack of targeted buyers may limit the profit potential of this premium commodity. However, FairWild certification may prove promising if this certification group becomes aligned with other fair market initiatives occurring in grassroots production and consumption arenas.

Intersecting Problems, and Opportunities

In this section I engage key findings to examine various issues facing fair market democratization. I first examine global, regional, and national fair trade considerations then note emerging Rooibos sector developments. Many of the issues uncovered during action research are structurally embedded in the broader context of trade inequality, yet promising trends and opportunities are nevertheless present. As this section argues, fair market considerations are girded by core tensions that generate movement dynamism as well as reinforce producer inequalities, though outcomes may differentially manifest across geographic and commodity arenas. The project team conducted action research to delineate problems and determine potential avenues and resources for emerging Rooibos farmers; thus analysis prioritizes this commodity network, with industry considerations detailed in Chapter Five. Table 4.9 clarifies major action research findings in regards to fair market considerations.

Table 4.9: Fair Market Intersectionality

Analysis	Democracy	Bureaucracy	Stratification
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilateral groups • Unity/difference • Democratic mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differing governance approaches and labels • Domestic labeling • Strong leadership • Wupperthal Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War of position • Smallholder BEE • Emerging producers remain at periphery
Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging farmer representation • Conflict • External control • Inaccurate training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired-labor/small farmer dichotomy • Information exchange • Technical complexity • Elite control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairwashing • Crosscutting inequalities • Poor infrastructure • Unequal markets • Networking costs
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple governance • Fair networking • Regional alignment • National governance • PCNR collaboration • Emerging farmer representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple certifications • Complimentary services • Managerial flexibility • Single audit stream • Multi-tier coops • Emerging Farmer standards • Training materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade-based community growth • South/South trade • Multilateral PIE and PAP • Mutual support • Leadership development • Land reform • BBBEE potential

Global Governance

Differing approaches to fair trade governance are the source of heated global debate, with disputes centering on the question of mainstreaming (Low and Davenport 2005a; Raynolds 2009; Raynolds and Wilkinson 2007). WFTO-based fair traders have long criticized FLO's mainstreaming policies. These cite the potential for corporate cooptation arguing that some retailers engage in 'fairwashing' by selling small quantities of fairtrade certified products without changing their broader business practices (Fridell 2007a; McMurty 2008). In contrast, FLO-based fairtraders express concern with WFTO's holistic approach, noting the technical difficulty of ensuring total value chain compliance, as well as the minimal markets that 100 Percent retailers are able to provide to producer groups.

Commercial tensions likewise appear to be the source of more recent FTUSA and FLO conflict. Whereas FTUSA has been central to FLO mainstreaming, it has decided to leave the FLO system to deepen corporate involvement, and this move is generating significant movement conflict. While differences between the FLO and WFTO labels may prove complimentary (WFTO 2011b), it is unclear how FTUSA divergence will impact overall movement viability (Fair Trade USA 2011c; Fairtrade Africa 2011b; Fairtrade International 2011d). As the global body most staunchly representing small producer interests, WFTO notes how FTUSA's unilateral decision-making lacks transparency, and disrespects democratic protocols. It eloquently states that "the Fair Trade supply chain should be relational in nature, with equal input and ownership by all parties" and argues that FTUSA's proposed changes will merely serve to "concentrate all the power at the top" (WFTO 2011c). Core movement emphasis is thus threatened. Indeed, fair trade is a movement that has historically focused on small producers to help families stabilize their market-based income.

By announcing its intention to expand hired-labor sourcing, FTUSA seems to be implying that industrial and market conventions are more important than the core civic and domestic values upon which the fair trade movement is based. During a research interview, a WFTO-aligned fair trader noted that small farmers often must work as farmworkers because their farms cannot survive alongside plantations, which produce in bulk and drive down market prices. While this informant recognized the potential benefits of hired-labor involvement in terms of improving farm laborer conditions, he questioned whether fair trade benefits would trickle down to the most disadvantaged producers of a plantation-based fair trade system.

Despite FLO's alignment with BBBEE in South Africa, national fairtrade growth has primarily occurred within the hired-labor sector, where these concerns are readily apparent.

During fieldwork, numerous organizational and community respondents stated that the involvement of hired-labor is limiting small farmer participation, with some arguing that this is reinforcing the socioeconomic and race-based inequalities that the movement is striving to transform. Emerging Rooibos producers possess significantly less land, infrastructure, and knowledge capital than their commercial cousins; yet they must compete with hired-labor entities in fairtrade markets. Given their inability to secure livable incomes as smallholders, some emerging farmers continue to work on commercial farms, often as informal seasonal workers who are unable to secure labor rights.

Many fairtrade goods exclusively fall into hired-labor or small farmer standards because certain items are better suited to small- or large-scale production, and by differentiating commodities in this way, fairtrade actors are able to prevent inequitable competition. Rooibos encompasses both standards. While this commodity is similar to herbal products in that it is better suited to small farmer production, tea is more generally a large-scale commodity. When developing product standards, FLO classified Rooibos as a tea, enabling hired-labor entry. While there are prospects for smallholder quality differentiation due to the outstanding market quality of Wupperthal tea, emerging farmers have yet to benefit from this potential advantage. More broadly, FTUSA's intention to introduce hired-labor standards within small-farmer commodities runs the risk of generating unfair advantage and locking marginalized groups into farmworker status. If industrial market norms take precedence over the domestic and civic fairtrade conventions, small farmers may lose significant market access.

In contrast, European-dominated FLO emphasizes a centralized governance approach. While FLO has pursued product mainstreaming in tandem with FTUSA, it also protects small farmer interests, perhaps operating with a European regard for small family farms and vibrant

communities (DuPuis and Goodman 2005; Keahey 2009). This centrist strategy enables political balance, but was not implemented within the context of Rooibos. Moreover, their approach may engender bureaucratic rigidity. By delineating small farmer and hired-labor standards, the FLO system threatens to lock emerging farmers into a state of dependency, whereby they are unable to operate independently or pursue commercialization while members categorized as hired-labor are able to maintain autonomy and more readily reap the benefits of fairtrade participation.

Despite these serious threats, ongoing movement divergence does offer growth potential for a variety of reasons. First, fair trade's 100 Percenters do not have the capacity to fundamentally transform global trade. By working in conjunction with powerful commercial interests, FTUSA and FLO-based mainstreaming may achieve a broader regulatory impact, though both groups must refrain from devolving into a mere tool for corporate public relations, which would ruin the reputation of a movement that has taken decades to build. Second, the current governance crisis provides an opportunity to address long-standing bureaucratic problems. In the South, auditing fees are prohibitively high for less-advantaged producers and expenses may cancel out minimum pricing benefits. FLO's product certification system may be placing a disproportionate share of bureaucratic burden on producers, who must increasingly comply with regulatory oversight in order to access markets. While they are not beholden to the same degree of regulatory oversight, Northern fairtraders must also pay large licensing fees, and this may be limiting commercial expansion. WFTO pursues a more equitable total value chain approach, but limited funds and weak auditing protocols may be constricting potential within this fair trade sector as well. Thus all governance groups demonstrate complementary strengths and weaknesses.

Current movement disputes may stimulate the development of creative solutions to these multifaceted issues. For example Southern actors may help address movement concerns by becoming more active within global governance. Just as Northern governance is diverging into multiple fair trade certification approaches, the development of Southern-based certification systems may likewise diversify movement viability. Local governance would likely be cheaper and less onerous than the current systems controlled by the Global North. However, without broad-based movement convergence, Southern certification initiatives will have to compete with powerful Northern certifiers for market space and brand recognition. In contrast, as company branding expands, product labeling may become less relevant. For example, certain groups—including the influential Equal Exchange—have chosen to eschew FTUSA certification by shifting to IMO certification, which provides third-party auditing services under a “Fair for Life” seal. A research informant operating at Ten Thousand Villages told me that recent labeling shifts have had no impact on Villages’ Equal Exchange sales because consumers value the Villages and Exchange company brands over specific product labels.

As mainstreaming deepens, fair trade’s small actor base is concerned that they will end up being pushed out of the movement that they created. However, numerous traders, retailers, and consumers remain deeply committed to fair trade’s foundational values, and these groups will continue to offer market space for small producers (Low and Davenport 2005b; Raynolds 2009; Raynolds and Keahey 2013). FTUSA’s approach may benefit farmworkers, while providing financially struggling conscious consumers with the ability to buy cheaper certified products in venues such as Walmart. Given these prospects, movement practitioners must collaborate to assess avenues for broad-based movement convergence. To maintain movement reputation, governance actors must convene to consider conscious consumer demands, and

commit to ongoing fair trade supply chain democratization. Indeed, FLO is now requiring traders to negotiate and write a development plan with producers, and fairtraders may expand upon these efforts to ensure that retailers and distributors assume more responsibility. As one organizational respondent argued, fair trade is a movement designed to assist disadvantaged producers, but in practice, FLO's primary beneficiaries are wealthy retailers. Apart from minimum pricing expenses, which importers often assume, retailers have few responsibilities. Moreover, FLO must pay liaison officers to manage certification. This system functions well, but it represents a hidden subsidy for retailers who gain market clout and prestige from label usage, while producers are the ones who must submit to operational scrutiny, and buyers and producers must assume the fees.

Regional Fair Market Considerations

Post-Apartheid political action is heatedly driven by numerous interest groups, yet the nation maintains a strong civil rights record and the overall political culture is oriented toward collaboration, consensus-building, and conflict resolution. South African fair traders are well aware of global governance conflict, but do not wish to become trapped by global disputes. Indeed, regional groups largely view FLO and WFTO's differing approaches as an opportunity for multidirectional engagement rather than as a cause for concern. As such FTSA voted to provide board space to WFTO-aligned COFTA, as well as to South Africa's tourism certification group. As one representative stated at the 2010 AGM where voting occurred: "we must try as much as possible to unite fairtrade because we can be a good example for the world by working together". Differing South African fair trader groups share office space and physical proximity has enabled information sharing, as well as more direct collaboration. As such, regional fair

traders are cooperating to offer complementary services and the nation may be the first to offer an integrated fair trade experience to conscious consumers. Producer involvement is also innovative: South African Rooibos farmers are pioneering emerging-farmer entry into fairtrade, and are striving to address market and system challenges by networking with organizational and industry bodies to achieve democratic representation. South Africa's movement is vibrant, but numerous challenges continue to persist. These include: (1) crosscutting inequalities, (2) external control, (3) inter- and intra-organizational conflicts, and (4) inaccurate and ineffectual training.

Human resources are limited, and in South Africa, FLO-based efforts have primarily focused on developing the hired-labor sector to secure farm laborer BBBEE rights. While fairtrade certified investment has been minimal in the small-farmer sector where emerging farmers primarily operate, numerous emerging groups have collectively organized and are seeking the commercial land and market access from which they have historically been excluded. Fairtrade certification offers lucrative market-access entry, but during fieldwork, there were only three South African groups certified under small farmer standards, and two of these were Rooibos farmer cooperatives. The Driefontein Small Farmers Primary Cooperative—which participated in project PAToT—has more recently achieved smallholder certification, increasing the overall number of certified groups to four, but given the rapid growth of South African fairtrade, smallholder involvement remains marginal.

The vast majority of South African fairtrade production remains concentrated within the White-dominated hired-labor sector. Given their relative lack of infrastructure and organizational expertise, it is more difficult for emerging farmers to access fairtrade pre-assessment requirements. Not only must they initiate the process, producer organizations must modify operational protocols to meet standards. While fairtraders are working to improve small farmer

support mechanisms via SAFN's technical assistance program, many emerging farmers are interested in fairtrade precisely because they want to commercialize in the same manner as their White peers. Due to the lack of emerging farmer standards—or other more integrated approaches—emerging producers are forced to decide between hired-labor or small farmer engagement. Hired-labor standards are daunting, but enable independence; in contrast, smallholder standards are easier to obtain, but lock emerging farmers into small-scale, cooperative-based production. Some respondents feel that FLO's smallholder/hired-labor system serves to maintain existing racial segregation and agricultural inequalities among South African producer groups.

Fairtrade actors have discussed the potential of differentiating standards: according to research respondents, there have been strides to develop specific standards for conflict and disaster zones, and FLO has begun to discuss potential emerging farmer strategic direction. The development of specific standards may better suit South African needs, and also assist marginalized agricultural entrepreneurs in other regions who wish to commercialize. However, implementation would take time as this would require the development of effective pre-assessment protocols. Meanwhile, emerging farmers can choose to apply under hired-labor standards in order to use fairtrade involvement as a means of gaining the technical and resource capacity necessary for commercialization. Minimum hired-labor and administrative requirements require greater expertise, but local fairtrade actors are aware of these concerns, and SAFN states that it can help facilitate the process by providing specialized support via its technical assistance fund.

Regional fairtraders also recognize complications that may occur from broadening producer standards. For example, FTA is interested in connecting to medium-sized emerging

farmers who may be ready to pursue commercialization. However, it notes that small producer sales may become compromised if FLO develops emerging farmer standards to encourage the growth of medium-sized emerging farmers. Moreover, fairtrade's diverse constituency maintains differing agendas, which were apparent during the FTSA AGM. Producers were broadly aligned: commercial farmers wished to support and strengthen emerging farmer involvement.

Smallholders and farmworkers likewise prioritized producer support and umbrella awareness.

Distributors were focused on product marketing and awareness-raising, while fairtrade networks prioritized managerial functioning, and other attendees mostly focused upon advocacy.

Another issue facing the South African movement is rapid growth, and the lack of effective training programs for underrepresented producer groups. As large-scale production dominates fairtrade expansion, there is a distinct need to support smallholders in meeting certification criteria so that they maintain equitable representation within the movement (Raynolds 2009). Certifiers should be able to provide market and training information to producers, but few producers engage this opportunity due to low capacity. While standards imply training, FLO-Cert notes that there is no formal training consolidation through liaison officers and producer groups must organize to seek the training they require. In terms of cooperative building, there are numerous democratic, bureaucratic, and stratification concerns. The fairtrade cooperative model derives from Latin America (Low and Davenport 2005b; Renard 2005), and some of my research respondents feel that the fairtrade cooperative arrangement differs from traditional forms of South African community organization. Externally imposed governance may engender local conflict, but others state that South Africa maintains a rich cooperative history, both within large-scale White-dominated agriculture and in Apartheid-era homelands. Some

South African fairtraders note that culturally grounded cooperative building may enhance this tradition, but inter-organizational alignment is necessary for this to occur.

Should South African fairtraders achieve broad-based convergence, bureaucratic streamlining may stimulate commercial and developmental action throughout the commodity network. However, diverse value chain actors will have to prove willing to coordinate objectives. FLO-based actors may be well positioned to facilitate this process. Due to the complexity of timber markets, FLO has developed an integrated supply chain approach within its timber standards, using the concept of fairtrade associations to align differing timber groups (FLO-I 2011a). This commodity network approach may be expanded to other industries to provide small and emerging producers greater production flexibility. Existing industry networks may provide an entry point. For example, SARC has instituted a Right Rooibos sustainability campaign with the intention of achieving stringent, industry-wide standards. With technical assistance, diverse producer groups may connect within these umbrella organizations to coordinate production challenges and improve producer representation.

The Emerging Rooibos Sector

South Africa has taken great strides to address deeply entrenched and crosscutting inequalities yet this nation has only recently emerged from Apartheid. Some research informants explicitly told me that South Africans continue to deal with a great deal of psychological and socioeconomic trauma deriving from decades of forced segregation and cultural assumptions of White superiority. National fairtraders are well aware of these concerns and view fairtrade market participation as a means of deepening reconciliation, though ultimately the process of reconciliation is both intimate and personal. My informant at SAFN states that “the fair trade

movement cannot correct behaviors, but behaviors on both sides must be corrected”. To help stimulate greater levels of interracial alignment, the South African movement must continue to address ongoing bureaucratic challenges to emerging farmer support. These include: (1) weak information exchange, (2) high networking costs, (3) lack of materials development and methods coordination, and (4) ineffective and inaccurate training.

While fairtrade participation can help build confidence and trust, this process must be multidirectional as farmer leaders point out that emerging communities have unique strengths and important lessons to teach. Participatory information sharing is thus a priority concern. FLO-Cert runs international training to provide information on standards and this may be a good entry point for producers seeking accurate knowledge. Fair trade market access is critical as membership provides access to assistance. Participating farmers cooperate to determine development investments and producer groups may join regional networks to share information and engage in advocacy and outreach. There is a great deal of opportunity for fairtraders to develop experiential learning programs. For example, emerging farmers may become more involved in advocacy campaigns to deepen their market skills. In the FTSA AGM, producers and laborers united around the question of support while traders and organizational actors focused on the need for enhanced advocacy and promotional campaigns. Constituents have differing goals, but these categories are not mutually exclusive: participating producer groups may become more involved in promotional outreach, thereby strengthening participatory market-access training and overall network support.

Wupperthal Rooibos farmers live in small hamlets. Lack of income limits the ability of farmers to upgrade operations, and many are dependent upon governmental subsidies for food security and basic education expenditures. Road and telecommunications infrastructure also

remain underdeveloped, though in Wuppertal, this is complicated by the Moravian church, which drives decision making. Infrastructure conditions are better in other emerging Rooibos communities, but these challenges make it difficult to maintain accurate information exchange and full democratic representation. In response to the Small Farmer Cooperative crisis, South African fairtraders note the potential for emerging farmers to organize into smaller first-tier cooperatives that may develop close trading relations with a minimal number of small buyers. This would enable leadership and management training to a greater number of producers and ensure manageable internal control. After successfully launching first-tier organizations, cooperative members would have the opportunity to collaborate more broadly by developing second and even third-tier formation to align broader Rooibos smallholder interests. Bureaucratic realignment may help solve local issues, but while farmers will need assistance in developing this opportunity, the decision to do so must come from within each of the communities and some of these may choose to pursue differing goals.

Emerging farmers also lack equitable access to commodity networking. Fairtrade provides all members with a democratic platform and SARC is an umbrella body available to all Rooibos constituents. Yet emerging farmers and farmworkers remain unable to fully participate. Not only are transformation and accommodation expenses daunting, emerging groups face technical challenges. Some lack confidence, as well as the business, language, and literacy skills required to effectively navigate the commodity network. Though these issues are complex and solutions are problematic, fairtrade organizations and training service providers recognize these concerns and are expanding technical training and networking. According to my SAFN respondent, “the business of fairtrade is unusual, but it is business as usual”. Organizations are able to take lessons learned and producer feedback to improve deliverability. By improving

managerial and democratic functioning, fairtraders may develop systems capable of capturing market and industrial quality demands while more effectively meeting the civic and domestic conventions that ground the movement. Ongoing growth requires grassroots leadership building, and farmer leaders are well poised to deepen their participation and the participatory commodity network research (PCNR) model provides a framework to help scale up this process to other product sectors.

The rise of multiple certifications is both a problem and opportunity (Courville 2008). Global markets are rapidly differentiating in terms of quality conventions and this is engendering bureaucratic complexity; yet, emerging producer managerial skills and training are preliminary. As multidirectional labeling a growing trend, numerous organizational bodies are examining potential for integrated delivery. If implemented, this may help emerging farmers more effectively differentiate their tea from hired-labor production. Emerging producer groups are essentially small enterprise entrepreneurs seeking added-value and product differentiation, but for cooperatives to efficiently adjust to shifting market demands, compliance costs must be affordable. The Right Rooibos label may eventually allow emerging Rooibos producers to enter into multiple standards and certification systems, and a singular auditing stream would help emerging producers meet shifting market trends by enabling them to sell to multiple fair markets.

Emerging Rooibos farmers grow tea in areas where there is significant cultural and ecological tourism potential. Farmer leaders express particular interest in developing fair trade tourism. FTSA certification may assist farmers wishing to expand beyond tea to diversify income and achieve greater income security given volatile Rooibos politics and market prices. Tourism efforts may also be aligned with both fairtrade Rooibos and fair trade handicraft development. Most respondents state that tourism development is a primary community goal,

and some females noted an interest in developing handicrafts to facilitate this growth. Members of the Strandveld Cooperative run a boutique in Elim which offers a wide variety of fine crafts alongside Strandveld tea. Additionally, Red Cedar Wupperthal is a BBBEE business instituted in 2004 by six local women who have successfully developed an exceptional line of Rooibos natural beauty products. The company has received national recognition and has steadily expanded its client base. Farmer leaders from this region have begun discussing the potential for building Rooibos-based tourism and FTTSA certification would help them develop accommodation, food, product, and tour guide services. Noting the prevalence of youth flight, many respondents view tourism as an opportunity to develop local employment to retain skilled young people (Red Cedar 2011).

Emerging farmers may also benefit from BEE/smallholder alignment. Emerging farmers face similar concerns as their farmworker peers, but implementers would have to develop a differing set of bureaucratic mechanisms to suit the emerging farmer context. While BBBEE results have been mixed within hired-labor, smallholder BEE entry may help emerging farmers address land tenure concerns that prohibit their ability to secure living incomes. While formal BBBEE policies have not yet been adapted with emerging farmers in mind, BAWSI is innovating involvement via BEE tea market development. By constructing Black-owned Rooibos businesses, this group hopes to redress Apartheid-era Rooibos monopoly inequalities. While my BAWSI informant describes the organization as a “rural, revolutionary, working-class group [that believes] in radical change”, he also stresses sound business principles and pursues market capital to further its political aims. In addition to BEE market growth, the group is pursuing land reform and industry representation. BAWSI remains marginalized due to its radical engagement, but there is potential for broader alignment. Indeed, BAWSI mirrors fair

trade sentiment by arguing that emerging farmers should not be seen as beneficiaries, but rather as agricultural entrepreneurs. It also states that some African-American buyers have expressed interest in supporting BEE product growth, and that certification alignment may help farmers capitalize on this potential. Though its practices may be divisive, BAWSI pursues similar fair market procurement and networking representation goals. Negotiation may be contentious, but collaboration may revolve around information sharing, action planning, and leadership building.

By aligning efforts, organizations may more effectively assist emerging farmers in achieving greater representation. Training methods and materials coordination needs to occur in order to improve delivery of services and ensure overall training quality. EMG notes that structural inequalities in formal education may engender potential for emerging farmer manipulation. Indeed, many emerging farmers lack market knowledge as well as confidence, and place a high degree of trust in external experts—some of whom may not be trustworthy. Emerging farmer communities have long been subject to external control, and organizational infighting at all levels has engendered disastrous consequences for producers who are already struggling to make ends meet. Differing network groups maintain their own sociopolitical agendas, which may or may not represent emerging farmer interests. Thus communities must collaborate with one another to respond to industry and organizational developments and develop their own approach. A Rooibos conservation researcher stresses that SARC must be sensitive to emerging farmer needs and directly link farmers to research. As she states, scientific procedure is important, but full information is critical. Top-down research approaches not only run the risk of harming research communities, they may generate incorrect or misleading findings by failing to capture local knowledge.

Conclusion

The conflict within Northern governance over the question of movement mainstreaming is unfortunate for two reasons. First the movement's differing approaches have engendered a resilient and flexible regulatory trading network capable of reforming global markets, yet ideological disputes inhibit convergence. Second, this study shows that African groups are transcending the market/movement dichotomy by moving toward broad-based alignment, but Northern contentions may obscure successful Southern strategies as networks necessarily respond to the conflict. Nevertheless, an economic revolution is occurring, and fair trade activists at all levels are adept at locating advantages in disturbances.

African fair traders are working to diversify their efforts while streamlining an interconnected movement approach, and in Rooibos, emerging producers are exploring broader fair trade involvement. As grassroots fair traders cooperate to develop integrated support, their efforts may help inform global movement reconciliation. It is difficult to coordinate action across geographic distances and in highly competitive trade arenas, but commodity networks provide fair market entrepreneurs with an opportunity to link local, national, and global entities. To capitalize from dynamic tensions, network actors must redress power imbalances and improve the multidirectional flow of affiliated groups and entities that Figure 4.2 illustrates.

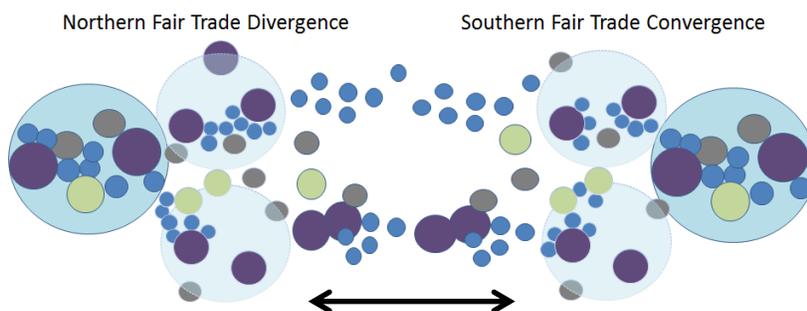


Figure 4.2: Fair Trade Challenges and Opportunities

Table 4.10 provides a Fair Market SWOT-V analysis. Fair trade engagement enables all members of the value chain to capture more value. As such, differing groups may define geographic and business scope and set up a joint body to more formally institute PIE and PAP processes.

Table 4.10: Fair Market SWOT-V

Analysis	Fair Markets	Commodity Network
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Movement mainstreaming • Sales growth • Multiple regulatory strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic commodity • Umbrella networks • Multilateral interest groups • Visionary network goals • Value addition
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protectionist attitudes • Northern control • Producer dependency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication • Lack of coordination • Structural inequalities
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology • Conscious consumerism • Multiple approaches • Unifying core values • Integrated networking • Polycentric regulation • Fair market growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capabilities • Progressive network • Democratic procedures • Network PIE/PAP • Producer-industry support • Value chain integration • Coordinated growth
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural inequalities • Ideological rigidity • Ineffective regulation • Movement conflicts • Movement cooptation • Multilateral dependency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatile market prices • Shifting buyers • Monopolism and secrecy • Multiple audits • High export costs • Structural inequalities
Vision	Emerging farmer fair-market access and industry representation for an integrated and responsive Rooibos value chain	

As this chapter has argued, the fair market movement is facing a great deal of differentiation in multiple directions, and an integrated value chain approach may more firmly ground efforts within given commodity sectors. For example, industries are instituting commodity network bodies to engage interest groups as a means of coordinating market

objectives and growth. Fair traders may explore prospects for developing an integrated system interface with industry bodies to streamline approach, thereby minimizing bureaucratic complexity and cost for producers. Finally, there is a distinct need to more effectively ensure accountability, transparency, and support from higher up in the value chain. Retailers, importers, and exporters must assume more responsibility in terms of supporting producer certification. Indeed, one might argue that retailers represent fairtrade's biggest beneficiary, as they gain enormous market clout, trust, and respect for using the FLO label, but retailers hold few responsibilities apart from paying the minimum fairtrade pricing, which importers often assume.

For better or worse, the forces of globalization have wrought an economic revolution that is rapidly restructuring human organization. If the fair trade movement is to harness this momentum and more broadly achieve global trade reform, actors must recognize differing strategies as opportunities rather than as threats. By developing solution-driven approaches and by integrating multiple efforts, the global fair trade movement may more effectively respond to rapidly evolving sustainability demands. Chapter Six turns more specifically to national-level analysis in its examination of industry considerations. However, findings demonstrate that many of the challenges and prospects facing fair traders are likewise mirrored within the Rooibos industry, and these parallels further support the call for more holistic commodity network alignment.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE EMERGING ROOIBOS INDUSTRY

Introduction

This chapter analyzes the challenges and opportunities facing the South African Rooibos industry, which is striving to address structural inequalities while positioning its product within global markets. Under Apartheid, Rooibos sales were largely restricted to South Africa; thus this herbal tea has only recently become known within world trading systems. As the global demand has grown, local cultivation has likewise expanded, with approximately half of gross domestic production now destined for export (Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010), and while the export market has proven to be volatile (SARC 2010a), the increasingly well-documented health benefits of Rooibos demonstrates significant growth potential (SARC 2010b). Despite these prospects, the majority of emerging farmers have yet to reap livable wages from Rooibos production.

There are inequitable outcomes within the fairtrade Rooibos sector as well. As FLO has instituted both smallholder and hired-labor standards in this commodity, less-advantaged emerging farmers must compete with established commercial actors and the number of certified labor estates has surpassed the number of fairtrade cooperatives (FLO-Cert 2011b). Large entities possess the land and resources to produce more for less, making it difficult for certified smallholders to compete; yet FLO pricing is essential for emerging groups struggling to gain market access. Although fairtrade helps producers via premium pricing and technical support, entry has been rocky, and many farmers remain dependent upon external forces over which they have little influence. According to Raynolds and Ngcwangu (2010: 76-78) “tea production patterns, like those in other major tropical commodities, reflect the legacy of colonialism” and

emerging Rooibos farmers have “long lived in poverty on the margins of society, eking out a living from gathering natural products, low productivity farming, and poorly paid agricultural employment”. Historically, White brokers have paid low prices to struggling Rooibos producers, and low pricing remains a reality for many.

Rooibos grows well in arid environments, where emerging farmers typically operate, but the crop is sensitive to rainfall and the industry must navigate price fluctuations wrought by climactic conditions and shifting market demands (SARC 2010a). Whereas Table 5.1 demonstrates the growth in Rooibos exports over the past decade, it also highlights the existence of global market volatility. To deal with fluctuations, commercial firms stockpile tea when there is a glut, and unload their product when pricing is high. Emerging farmers have less ability to manage price fluctuations as many must sell their crop immediately at any cost in order to survive.

Table 5.1: Rooibos Industry Total Export Volumes 1999-2009 (metric tons)

Analysis	Year	Total Export Volumes	Annual Growth Rate 1999-2009
	1999	1,827	--
	2001	3,888	113%
	2003	5,964	53%
	2005	5,348	-10%
	2007	7,176	34%
	2009	6,267	-13%
	Annual Average Growth Rate		35%

Source: Adapted from SARC (2010a)

Despite these issues, the story of Rooibos is compelling in that the industry as a whole is pursuing progressive transformation. Civil society is aligning with industry groups to devise a set of industry-wide sustainability standards. Multiple standards and certification programs are

entering the Rooibos sector to ensure social and environmental guarantees, and producer support is increasingly available to emerging groups. Moreover, SARC is seeking to integrate the efforts of its diverse constituency in order to generate a bold vision for aligned market growth. It has led the Right Rooibos initiative, which promotes an integrated management system that captures key protocols in regards to labor and employment, BBBEE, and environmental stewardship (Pretorius et al. 2011). The Right Rooibos campaign may ultimately realize a stringent industry-wide mark that would enable actors to capture multiple standards and certifications in a single auditing stream. Progressive voices have also called for greater emerging farmer representation and this group may use these developments to develop progressive industry partnerships. Thus one project objective consisted of working with SARC to provide an enabling environment for emerging farmer interests.

Rooibos Industry Structure

Rooibos operatives comprise multiple and overlapping interest groups. These are very small-scale community-based emerging farmers, previously disadvantaged commercial producers, and White commercial farmers, including both large- and small-scale growers. First-stage processing occurs on tea courts. In the commercial sector, courts tend to be on a farmer's own land whereas courts in the emerging sector are co-owned by cooperative members. After the tea is dried on the courts, cooperatives sell the material to processing firms. Some companies are essentially large farms that both produce and purchase tea, but a small number of large processors pasteurize all of the tea produced in South Africa, either by charging producers for this service or by directly purchasing the tea. Processors tend to directly market and distribute their own tea, and most are members of the South African Rooibos Council (SARC). As such,

firms engage in industry research and play a strong role in developing marketing initiatives. Though processors distribute, some large packer branders own and pack their own brands, such as National Brands (which owns Rooibos labels such as Freshpack and Unilever). Other smaller packers operate on contract, packaging tea according to buyer requirements. Small exporters purchase tea from farmers then contract processors and sometimes local packers to develop the product.

Once the tea leaves South Africa, intermediary shipping firms and internal tracking companies perform logistics. Procedures are dictated by national law and exporters must comply with export certification guidelines (PPECB 2012). The Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) visits facilities to draw samples for review. According to my respondents, tests determine whether the batch complies with regulations and include stringent microbe testing. After a company obtains an export certificate, the trader must apply for additional certification with the Department of Agriculture in order to conduct export logistics. These involve (1) arranging freight, (2) tracking, and (3) ensuring the correct import documentation for international clients. This last consideration is complex and requires money and time as specific markets are guided by differing national regulations. Once goods are on the water, exporters must track the product then confirm docking, customs, and transfer, which involves final payment if full payment has not been arranged in advance.

Figure 5.1 provides a visual mapping of the industry. Note that this dissertation focuses on the South African end of the value chain. Within this chapter, I also omit commercial farmers from analysis as PAR prioritized the emerging farmer context, but future project cycles may engage hired-labor entities, particularly as both emerging and commercial actors have invested in alternative standards and certifications.

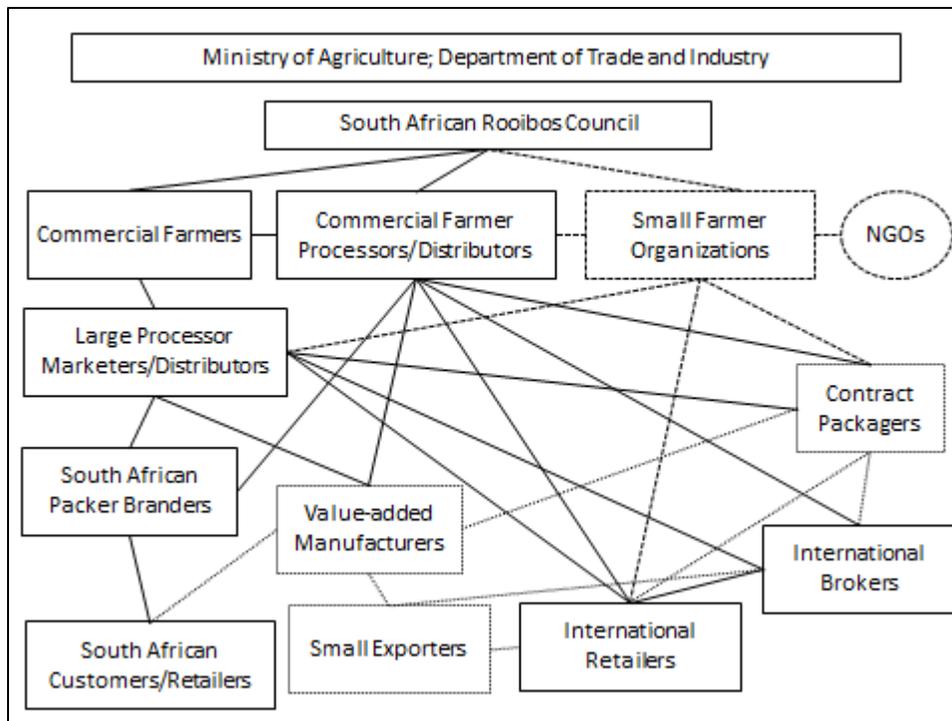


Figure 5.1: Rooibos Commodity Network

Source: Adapted from Bramley et al. (2009)

While I was unable to directly involve farmer leaders in industry interviews, I maintained PAR emphasis by choosing to deepen my own Rooibos knowledge alongside the leaders via training, participant observation, and midterm farmer fieldwork. As such, I explicitly waited to conduct industry research until the final project stage. This not only allowed me to pragmatically engage industry interviews as a commodity networking device, it also enabled me to solicit input from leaders and farmer respondents so that I could request interviews with industry entities that they identified as most critical. Unless otherwise cited, chapter information and direct quotes derive from the interviews listed below, or from presentations and discussions during commodity networking events.

Table 5.2: Industry Interviews

Method	Rooibos Cooperatives*	Processors, Distributors, and Packagers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative • Wupperthal Original Cooperative • Rooikastert Agriculture Cooperative • Strandveld Tea Farmers Cooperative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooibos Ltd. • Kings Products • Cape Natural Tea Products • Fair Packers
		Umbrella Networks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SARC • Right Rooibos Initiative

Notes:

* I did not formally interview members of the Heiveld and Driefontein cooperatives but discuss these groups in my small farmer organization analysis.

Small Farmer Organizations

In this section I detail the specific issues of emerging Rooibos farmer entities. My analysis primarily examines cooperatives located in participating project communities, with some minor exceptions. In 2010, the Driefontein Small Farmers Cooperative was a newly-formed venture and not yet fairtrade certified. Although this group sent representatives to our PAToT sessions, they joined the program mid-cycle when I was in the field with farmer leaders and I did not find time to interview them. The Heiveld Cooperative was an established fairtrade producer and well recognized within the industry. After submitting an action research proposal to this group at project inception, Heiveld declined project participation, citing research fatigue. While the group expressed potential interest in contributing to data collection that would not require broader project involvement, it requested an additional proposal before it would allow communication with its board or members. My goal was to work directly with participants to ensure greater involvement in the research process and maximize benefits; thus I chose to limit

fieldwork to groups in participating project communities. However, I did interview EMG representatives who have worked closely with Heiveld in order to help frame the broader cooperative context.

After examining broader groups, I provide an in-depth analysis of the Wupperthal situation where the majority of emerging Rooibos farmers operate and conclude by noting the central challenges and opportunities facing cooperatives as they struggle to gain industry standing and fair market access.

The Driefontein Cooperative

The Driefontein Cooperative formed out of alliance between 36 permanent farmworkers and a commercial farmer who collaborated to determine the most effective business model for emerging farmer growth. In early 2010, the group placed a large farm into a trust in order to form a cooperative that could access fairtrade and organic markets, directly affecting 150 community members. The cooperative rapidly gained certification and currently operates as an independent legal entity that adheres to fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, and organic certification standards. The board consists of six elected directors who manage production and finances, and the group invests in management training to ensure appropriate conduct. Driefontein rents equipment and shares one tea court with three other farms. While it independently brands its tea, Driefontein sells to Rooibos Ltd. which locates markets on its behalf. Cooperative formation has helped the Driefontein community to send the son of a farmer to university, and members are saving to purchase their own land should this become available (Driefontein 2011a).

The Strandveld Tea Farmers Cooperative

In 2010 the Strandveld Tea Farmers Cooperative was transitioning from an association to a more formal cooperative. This community is unique in that it is located in the southern Cape, entirely outside of traditional Rooibos country. According to my respondents, the group loosely formed out of a joint project funded by The Shell Foundation in conjunction with Cape Natural Tea Products (CNTP). Farmers sell their tea to this processor which buys the tea wet because Strandveld does not yet have drying capacity. In turn, CNTP sells Strandveld-branded tea to Woolworths—South Africa’s luxury supermarket retailer—as part of a corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative. Woolworths sells this Rooibos to consumers for minimal profit in order to generate community recognition. Whereas the farmers receive a lower price per kilo than their northern counterparts, they have not been responsible for transportation or processing fees, but this situation is impermanent and some within the group would like to develop the capacity to sell their tea more broadly. The cooperative is in the process of developing its own tea court and Strandveld has been collaborating with CNTP and the Department of Agriculture to seek funding.

The departure of Rooibos from its traditional growing area of the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC) is a recent phenomenon. In 2005, an emerging farmer in the Strandveld coastal area began experimenting with this species and the Shell project formally began in 2006 via the Elim Town Council which linked with CNTP to do growth tests and develop planting protocols. Testing found that Rooibos grows robustly in the wetter southern climate, enabling farmers to harvest a crop in the first season. However, Strandveld bushes only last for three years whereas Rooibos grows more slowly and can be harvested for up to a decade in its traditional zone. As one farmer leader described it “the Rooibos grows quickly but doesn’t

last”. The question of drying also concerns Strandveld growers. The wetter climate encourages rapid growth, but hinders tea court processing though CNTP notes that there are a number of locations in the region with suitable micro-climates, and a court may be placed in one of these.

Some industry representatives feel that Strandveld’s tea cannot match the quality of Rooibos that is grown in traditional zones. Emerging farmers residing in the most arid regions of the GCBC are recognized for producing superior tea as compared to their commercial counterparts in the wetter western slopes due to the slower growth of arid Rooibos bushes, and the Strandveld region is still wetter. Yet CNTP states that processing techniques impact flavor as much as growing conditions and it stresses that Strandveld is well positioned to operate in mainstream markets because it can deliver a good product in quantity. This point demonstrates the potential for cooperatives to access various markets via quality differentiation. Whereas low-volume groups should locate lucrative buyers that wish to purchase small amounts of high-quality smallholder tea, other cooperatives may more effectively compete within the industrial domain as they commercialize. Producers should expand their awareness of quality trends in order to critically evaluate their assets and determine an appropriate market production plan. Rather than following one formulaic model, cooperatives may access multiple markets via product differentiation, thus minimizing the potential for unproductive competition.

With eight founding members of whom four are executive directors, Strandveld is small but hoping to expand despite the challenges it faces—including an aging and independently minded community. As one member put it, “we’ve all worked on our own for years and now must work together. There is distrust. People stand back and say I’ll watch what you do, prove me wrong”. At the same time, most felt that being a member of a cooperative was fruitful because as a legal entity, the community has greater access to governmental funding as well as

market-access training. Although Strandveld did not possess any certifications at time of research, it was “investigating all options”. Management has internet access in nearby Elim and four members recently received computer training. Yet cooperative members state that they lack sufficient knowledge in which to base decisions. White farmers in the region historically have not shared market information with Coloured farmers and Shell project assistance was limited to agriculture planting training. Indeed, farmers first began planting Rooibos because they were desperate for assistance. Despite the community’s repeated applications for support, good training opportunities have remained scarce, particularly in regards to market access.

Over the next five years, the group hopes to develop its own tea court and achieve the capacity to access its own markets, with a priority on national market growth. Some members are pushing for organic certification and there is an expressed desire to generate a packaging base within the community as this will enable the group to make business decisions that will positively impact the next generation. Yet the cooperative lacks sufficient funding to accomplish major goals and the community is aging as youth seek work in the cities. Strandveld would like to develop a scholarship program in order to send a young adult for tertiary education in quality testing and marketing, and over the long run, the cooperative may serve as a mechanism for community development by creating jobs and providing services that will retain youth. As market opportunities expand, members are discussing how to maintain a sense of unity. The farmer leaders in this region are closely involved in cooperative building and community strengthening activities. In the words of one: “I put in free time to the coop and make it my personal duty to visit each farmer, to have a conversation, to make them understand the coop and its five year mission. I need to convince them to give a little of themselves and their time and that if so we can achieve our mission”.

Rooikastert Agricultural Cooperative

Within the southern Bokkeveld region of the northeastern GCBC, currently two small farmer cooperatives are producing Rooibos—the Heiveld Cooperative, which primarily consists of a group of farmers from the Melkraal area, and the Rooikastert Agricultural Cooperative (formerly Ebenezer Association) which incorporates most of the area’s remaining emerging farmers. Rooikastert maintains 12 members who are largely retired male farmworkers led by an active leader who fulfills most of the group’s administrative functions. He represents the only farmer leader for this group because none of the women present at the capabilities workshop wished to serve in this capacity. Via cooperative membership, the group shares a tract of tea land that they rent and they collectively produce approximately 8-10 tons of dry tea per annum. As their leader states, “we plant together, harvest together, and then share the money”. The group also co-owns 140 sheep and it regularly sells meat to the Nieuwoudtville and Calvinia butchers. Indeed, the group formed in the late 1990s to help retired farm laborers hold onto their sheep as “they were kicked off” their commercial farms when they became “too old to work” and wished to retain their sheep after relocating to low-income housing in town. The local ANC branch assisted the farmworkers in developing the association.

The group first planted Rooibos in 2007 when it acquired access to land through the Nieuwoudtville Municipality after a previous tenant contract had expired. It harvested its first crop in 2009 and has sold all of its tea to Nieuwoudtville Rooibos Ltd. where the cooperative’s leader works as Quality Control Assistant. This processing firm is a newly established government-owned entity that pays standard prices for the conventional tea that it acquires. Rooikastert decided to sell to Nieuwoudtville because its central location means that members do not have to pay for transport and as Rooikastert only produces a small amount of tea for local

sale, it is not pursuing any cooperative certifications. While this arrangement has proven beneficial, the long-term viability of the Nieuwoudville processing firm is unclear. The government has invested in state-of-the-art infrastructure, but at time of research the company possessed minimal staff and had yet to sell any of the tea stockpiled in its storehouse.

Instead of paying large dividends to its members, Rooikastert reinvests much of its profit in tea. It also pursues grant opportunities and recently received funds from the Department of Trade and Industry to assist in small cooperative formation. Rooikastert's leader states that the Department of Agriculture is interested in developing cooperatives in the Nieuwoudtville area in order to provide its processing firm with a ready production base, and he claims numerous benefits to becoming a cooperative, including more structured management, allocation of registered shares to each member, and clear rules to guide democratic decision making which is critical for emerging farmers struggling to overcome the psychological impacts of Apartheid. As he states, "farmworkers must learn how to give instructions rather than just take orders". Thus Rooikastert's leader works with members to reach full consensus on every decision that affects the group.

While Rooikastert's small membership base facilitates internal communication, there are nevertheless difficulties facing the organization as a whole. There are numerous agencies that are supporting small enterprise development through the provision of free training in cooperative management and membership, but farmers are uncomfortable with the idea of training for a number of reasons. First there is a language barrier: many training representatives only speak Xhosa, Zulu, and English, but emerging Rooibos farmers are Afrikaans-speaking, and many lack the requisite English skills to attend such courses. Second, members lack self-confidence regarding their ability to learn new information. Third, elderly farmers do not want to leave the

safety of their homes to attend training in other areas. As a result, Rooikasterter's leader has experienced difficulty encouraging members to join courses. Nevertheless six cooperative members have attended local courses in practical topics such as shearing, welding and tractor maintenance; thus the training issue is not insurmountable.

Frankly, the biggest challenge facing Rooikasterter is the question of land access. As the group rents its tea lands, tenure is by no means secure and it is unclear whether or not the group will be able to hold onto these lands once its contract expires. This makes it difficult to plan for the future. According to a Rooikasterter respondent, in the Nieuwoudtville region "White commercial farmers have everything. The price of land is so high the government is not willing to invest and people with Rooibos farms don't want to sell". Markets are difficult to capture without land or production capital; thus emerging farmers are unable to take full advantage of standards and certifications. Moreover, whereas small enterprise development funding exists, one must know how to obtain it. People who are illiterate or who lack internet access cannot functionally locate funding, and until this situation is resolved they will remain dependent upon those who do. Rooikasterter's organizer is savvy and has achieved a great deal for his community, but he must fulfill multiple functions and requires a qualified assistant to assist with daily management so that he may pursue the larger task of securing sustainable land tenure.

The Heiveld Cooperative

The Heiveld Cooperative was founded in 2001 by fourteen members who worked closely with the EMG to develop operations and the group currently consists of 58 members producing 50-80 tons of dual fairtrade/organic certified tea per annum. According to its website, the group exports to markets in Europe, North America, and the Pacific Rim. Heiveld members offer direct

wholesale export as well as custom packaging to national and global buyers, and it claims to be the world's first supplier of sustainably harvested wild tea (Heiveld 2012) though Wupperthal has historically harvested this tea as well. The cooperative has received long-term support from EMG, and a representative resides in a house attached to Heiveld's office. He is active in fairtrade circles and was involved in a wild Rooibos sustainability study to help the cooperative develop harvest protocols (Malgas and Oettle 2007).

Although EMG states that it does not have a mandate to speak on Heiveld's behalf, it works closely with this group and representatives agreed to share information via interviews. When EMG first became involved with emerging Rooibos farmers, it found that individuals were competing with one another and selling for very low prices. It sought to assist eventual Heiveld members so that emerging farmers could improve their livelihoods without increasing environmental impacts. As producers were already growing Rooibos without pesticides and fertilizers, EMG raised funds to help them gain organic certification. The organization then worked with both the Heiveld and Wupperthal communities to get onto the fairtrade register. It states that dual certification has enabled Heiveld farmers to more than double the profit from their Rooibos sales. In terms of cooperative building, EMG has provided financial management and market-access training. The cooperative is democratically organized, but EMG says that the Heiveld board does not maintain representation from each member area as this is not a constitutional mandate, though it does attempt to ensure variety from within its ranks.

Despite the benefits that Heiveld farmers have received from FLO membership, EMG appears to be wary of the system as a whole. Whereas the consumer image of fairtrade tends to be of cooperatively minded smallholders, in South Africa, fairtrade producers mainly consist of White commercial farm owners who wish to support their Black and Coloured workers. An

EMG respondent claims that “small farmers are the least politically empowered within the fairtrade system” and notes that standards are developed in Bonn where smallholders have little voice. EMG likewise notes the difficulty facing producer networks face as they strive to meet increasingly complex standards and certifications that reflect deeply embedded structural inequalities. One EMG respondent states that EMG and Heiveld were naïve about the implications of Rooibos being classified as a tea in the FLO register. Had it been classified as an herb which more closely represents its optimal cultivation conditions, Rooibos would have remained a smallholder product, but placement on the tea register enabled hired-labor entry. Small farmers had hoped to use fairtrade certification in order to expand their presence in U.S markets, but when FLO formalized classification, commercial farmers certified and their lower pricing attracted U.S. buyers. According to EMG, “when plantation Rooibos hit the market, it significantly lowered prices and prevented small Rooibos farmers from gaining U.S. access”.

Broader fairtrade tensions regarding the question of producer designations have not only ignited discord between White commercial and Coloured small farmers, they have engendered internal small farmer conflict as well. In 2004, EMG and Heiveld ostensibly approached Wuppertal to align market interests. The two cooperatives initially shared one fairtrade client and in 2005 began collaborating on the Fair Packers joint-packaging venture which I discuss in detail in the following chapter section. This relationship subsequently collapsed due to managerial and financial conflict as well as inflated and shifting buyer promises.¹⁶ The Heiveld responded by retreating from collaboration in order to achieve total organizational independence. Yet despite the multiple difficulties that the cooperative has experienced during its preliminary years of fairtrade membership Heiveld’s members depend upon fairtrade pricing. Moreover, the cooperative has been broadly touted as South Africa’s smallholder fairtrade success story.

¹⁶ This may have been linked to the entry of commercial Rooibos into the FLO system.

According to EMG the cooperative has investigated other certification groups—including meeting with Rainforest Alliance and UTZ—but does not wish to incur additional certification and compliance costs unless the benefits are commensurate.

At the same time many within the Rooibos commodity network question Heiveld’s capacity to operate in markets without direct EMG support. Unfortunately, I was unable to speak directly with Heiveld farmers or board members about these concerns, but did note the general absence of members in the various industry networking events that I attended, including the FTSA AGM in which a small farmer representative is regularly nominated and elected to the FTSA board via constituency vote. However, EMG noted its investments in long-term capacity building which have ranged from practical sessions to more in-depth market training. Despite its close involvement, EMG representatives insist that the organization merely acts “as a go-between for farmers dealing with fairtrade issues” and they highlight the fact that Heiveld members travel to trade fairs in order to meet with buyers. Noting that the cooperative is suffering from research fatigue, an organizational representative has helped Heiveld develop a research protocol that requires potential researchers to specifically outline benefits for the cooperative’s producers should they choose to participate.

The Wupperthal Cooperatives

I now turn to a discussion of Wupperthal’s complex Rooibos situation. In 2010, three organizational factions had emerged within this region in response to ongoing tea crises: (1) Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative, (2) Wupperthal Original, and (3) producers aligned with BAWSI. However, farmers in this region historically have been united under one entity. The Wupperthal Rooibos Tea Association began in 1998 when the Western Cape Department of

Economic Affairs and various NGOs involved the community in a reconstruction and development program. Wupperthal farmers had been producing Rooibos since the 1970s, and because they did not use pesticides or chemical fertilizers on their small plots of land, farmers in this region decided to pursue organic certification. The young association bought a tractor, upgraded the old tea court with Department of Agriculture funding, and in 1999 secured Eco-Cert organic certification.

In these early days, standards were less complicated and more easily managed by the cooperative. Nevertheless there was a need for training and various agencies offered workshops on topics such as financial management, market-access, and organic production, though it appears that different numbers of farmers were involved in each. According to a longstanding cooperative respondent, the association experienced continuous growth, apart from a 2002 drought year in which membership grew but production declined. Association expansion occurred over a short timeframe as emerging farmers joined the group in order to capture benefits.

While initial association growth offered a great deal of promise to Wupperthal's broader community, managing a large cooperative that must meet fairtrade and organic standards requires significantly more technical expertise than running a small association, and membership expansion soon outpaced managerial training. Moreover, the rapid growth of the cooperative occurred within an industry that traditionally has been marked by considerable export volatility. A cooperative official provided me with data during this period of rapid cooperative expansion, which I list in Table 5.3. Note that data for subsequent years was lost due to cooperative turmoil as discussed below.

Table 5.3: Wupperthal Rooibos Tea Association Growth

Analysis	Year	Event	Membership	Tons Produced
	1998	Association formation	25	16
	1999	Organic certified	35	55
	2000		51	81
	2001		80	101
	2002	Drought year	93	90
	2005	Fairtrade certified: Fair Packers launched	180	140

Source: Data provided during an interview with a cooperative official

As co-founders of the emerging Rooibos farmer enterprise; the histories of Heiveld and Wupperthal are inexorably intertwined. Prior to formal FLO certification, the Dutch-based Fairtrade Organisatie (now Fairtrade Original) bought Wupperthal tea from the Moravian Church Mission Station¹⁷ via a broker processor. However, present-day Heiveld farmers were located well to the north of Wupperthal and were not part of the Church structure. After cooperative formation, Heiveld was the first to gain FLO certification, though Wupperthal quickly followed suit. While EMG was instrumental in helping Wupperthal become fairtrade certified, it has been less involved with farmers in this region. Indeed, Wupperthal has received support from a diverse range of actors who have not always been in communication with one another.

Unlike the Heiveld community, which is significantly smaller and whose members primarily reside in one area, Wupperthal consists of multiple communities separated into distant outstations that are only accessible by formidable dirt roads. In order to elect representatives, share information, and otherwise coordinate activities, the group chose to conduct member meetings in Wupperthal Central where the tea court was based, but far-flung farmers were not always able to attend. Wupperthal's 2005 elections occurred in the midst of financial conflict.

¹⁷ In Wupperthal, tea production was historically processed through the Church structure which owns all the land in this area and rents plots to farmers for a small fee.

One respondent who was present during this period notes that the association had a large surplus in the bank due to the higher organic price it had been receiving. Farmers had received standard pricing and felt management was retaining too much money in the form of commissions and salaries. They demanded organizational restructuring and elected a new board and committee to manage affairs.¹⁸

In late 2005 incoming cooperative management promised farmers high prices for their future tea as the group was positioned to formally enter fairtrade markets; however sales were more limited than expected so much of the 2006 crop went into storage and management used the cooperative surplus to pay the farmers the sum it had promised. In 2007, the cooperative lowered its promised price, but still could not achieve these rates so paid members for a quarter of their yearly crop, stockpiling the remainder. In 2008, the farmers received nothing, and in 2009 the cooperative lost both organic and FLO certification. At this time, an external actor claiming to be a lawyer entered the scene and encouraged the group to pursue organizational restructuring. Once again, members replaced Wupperthal's board and staff, and in March 2009 the cooperative elected a trusted farmer member to serve as Chairman. As one ejected staff member stated of the time: "there was nothing we could say. We weren't allowed to speak or explain what happened".

The Wupperthal community split into two as the expelled board members chose to entirely leave the group with a number of their followers in order to form a second cooperative on their own which they christened Wupperthal Original. The main entity—now classified as the Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative—was in debt, lacking certification, and facing membership accusations related to non-payment. The Chairman was an elderly man who had

¹⁸ The new management elected into office was led by the present-day Managing Director of Wupperthal Original which formed after Wupperthal splintered in 2009 due to a deepening deficit crisis.

served in a similar capacity for other groups. He spent over a year working without pay in an effort to resolve problems and cooperative staff felt that his business practices were sound. He actively sought conventional buyers for the tea that had been stockpiled in storage and eventually reached an agreement with Rooibos Ltd. The cooperative sold all of the 2008 and some of the 2009 crop in order to pay the remainder of 2007's promised price. The Chairman also instituted a new policy of maintaining separate yearly accounts to ensure that future budgets would be balanced at the end of each fiscal year. At the same time, he was unschooled in terms of standards and certifications and intensely frustrated by the application process; thus, whereas the newly formed Wupperthal Original quickly gained fairtrade and organic certification, Small Farmers floundered. The cooperative's lawyer agreed to pursue recertification, but after paying out extremely high fees over the course of seven months for services that were never completed, management discovered that their lawyer was not, in actuality, a lawyer. The group ejected him, but as a consequence lost critical records that it needed for recertification.

The Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative Chairman then appealed to the Department of Agriculture for assistance. In 2010, the government provided funding for a new storehouse, sent a staff member to computer training, and linked the community to a qualified accountant. It also held reconciliation meetings within the community, in which members of our project team attended. Ultimately however, the cooperative could not diffuse tensions and a third community faction splintered from the group when BAWSI entered the fray, bringing with it an affiliated firm that intended to brand the concept of BEE tea. Many farmers from the Suurrug and Heuningvlei communities supported this move and sold their tea to the BAWSI-affiliated firm in early 2010, receiving their first income in years. BAWSI later dismantled the tea company due to its fraudulent activities, but its farmers felt they had received a decent price and began working

more directly with BAWSI which instigated legal proceedings against Small Farmers. The cooperative responded by hiring a real lawyer as it sought to retain control of its tea court. However, infighting over the non-payment issue continued. Farmers felt betrayed because they had expected premium prices, but had received no payment and were desperately struggling to survive on little to no income.

Throughout 2009 and 2010, cooperative meetings ended in contentious fights which thwarted communication. Written forms of communication—including newsletters and financial reports—had not been developed under the previous administration nor instituted by new management, and this issue was not appropriately resolved. Many farmers attempted to gain news by telephoning the cooperative directly or by asking their committee representative, but as farmers divided into disputing factions, communities were faced with conflicting sources of information. Though the cooperative sought to address rumors by developing a full financial report to present to members in its mid-2010 general meeting, discussions were interrupted by fighting and the meeting abruptly closed. At that time, BAWSI had encouraged its followers to pursue another round of organizational restructuring in order to take over cooperative management; thus the board shut down meetings before elections could ensue. In the end, neither group triumphed as legal proceedings ended in cooperative liquidation.

The demise of the Small Farmers Cooperative occurred shortly after I left the research area in early 2011. When I interviewed the Chairman in mid-2010, he echoed other respondents by readily acknowledging the need for organizational assistance. He felt that agencies must provide cooperative staff and members with long-term training in organizational management, including finance, recordkeeping, communications, and market-access courses. He was hopeful that governmental assistance would help to reestablish cooperative prospects; however, he also

felt the intrusion of so many external actors into Wupperthal had served to enflame tensions and further divide the community. As he bluntly stated, “people from the outside should let us solve our own problems”. In retrospect, cooperative dissolution proved the best option for the community, and members appeared to accept the court’s decision with a mixture of resignation and relief. Yet the Chairman’s final piece of advice remains pertinent: as the Wupperthal community works to transcend a divisive period that ended in so much heartbreak, “farmer leaders can work to bring people together”.

Given this backdrop, an important question arises: at which point should external agents be held liable for local concerns? More broadly, to what degree are certifying organizations responsible for producer conflict, and how might supporting agencies develop peace and reconciliation protocols for when assistance ends in disaster? Blaming the producers is a facile excuse for non-action, particularly when local conflicts are mirrored throughout the value chain and higher level decision making disproportionately affects those at the base. Ultimately no one group is entirely to blame, but neither is any group blameless. When developing projects, practitioners must consider equitable resource distribution because impoverished communities are hungry for assistance and interventions can cause instability when not managed effectively. Moreover, training outcomes are lost if the community does not have the appropriate resources to put knowledge into practice; thus more collaborative support is necessary.

In a place such as Wupperthal, the concentration of resources within the regional center has prevented outstations from gaining critical market-access and managerial knowledge. This was the primary reason we decided to work directly with the outstations. As one respondent stated during an exploratory trip to the region, resources and information tend to flow into the center while the outstations must fend for themselves. In the context of fairtrade, initial

certification occurred amidst conflict, and members did not receive the degree of training that would be required of them to effectively manage a democratically organized bureaucracy. While it was surely not the intention of the cooperative or any assisting firms to promise more than could be delivered, the entirety of Wupperthal became caught up in the notion of a fair price without fully understanding market realities. One respondent states that “this is the reason for the whole unhappiness. When we got involved [in fairtrade] everyone madly planted tea so the quantity went up but the price stayed the same and a lot of tea sat in storage”.

In Chapter Four, I note the rapid growth of the global fair trade movement. The recent entry of multiple new products into the fairtrade register has largely been driven by African production growth. While the global movement has been responsive to multifaceted demands, bureaucratic restructuring takes time. It must be remembered that FLO only entered Rooibos during the same period that Heiveld and Wupperthal were pursuing certification; indeed fairtrade minimum pricing was not established for this product until 2008. In many ways, Wupperthalers faced a perfect storm: members became certified at a time when standards were not fully developed, and their hope for a better price prompted them to overproduce. Moreover, hundreds of Wupperthalers were struggling to make a decent living from small plots of land that would collectively support two commercial farm families. Hired-labor groups were similarly obtaining certification to assist their farmworkers, and the industry as a whole was entering into a commodity glut that drastically lowered prices. According to a cooperative member, Wupperthal’s fatal mistake was in setting “the price with the farmer before buyers were located”. FLO may have erred as well by opening Rooibos to both hired-labor and smallholder participation. Many small farmers worry about having to compete against those with greater

resources and social capital. One respondent critically asked “I understand we need to grow and that all trade should be fair, but is this fair”?

Wupperthal has suffered numerous crises, but it possesses a strong democratic spirit and boasts multiple charismatic leaders; indeed the community is so dynamic that this in itself may be a source of conflict. Yet if democracy is problematic, it also represents an opportunity to identify and achieve common goals and the Wupperthal community is highly resilient. Whereas some families in Central Wupperthal had become estranged over the Rooibos conflict, most respondents noted that this did not greatly impact familial relations. Even when locked in bitter dispute, all groups readily expressed a desire to reconcile, and while farmer leaders held differing perspectives, they respected and learned from one another’s insights. Moreover, the community produces excellent quality tea that buyers want. To my mind, Wupperthal represents both a story of conflict and of triumph, for the community has demonstrated an empowered determination to actively engage with the network in which it operates, for better or for worse. Younger cooperatives would do well to learn from its successes, as well as its errors in judgment.

As another point of opportunity, Wupperthal Original has formed a viable fairtrade organization with a smaller membership base of 88 members, 39 of whom are female. Women are represented in management and board positions and the group has developed operations with minimal assistance from the Moravian Church—which provided building access—and preliminary industry support via a processing firm. Members took advantage of their own labor to establish a new tea court, with each member contributing one sack of cement, and the group had established trade relations with buyers in Europe, North America, and India before the court was complete. It chose to reinvest its first round of fairtrade social premium funds to complete cooperative infrastructure, and while the young organization was still working on establishing a

communication process, it was planning to institute a quarterly newsletter to effectively share critical information. Similarly to other respondents, cooperative representatives recognize the need for training as “the more members understand, the better the machine will work”. Although some within Wupperthal are distrustful of the new cooperative because they believe its leaders were the ones who had generated the massive Small Farmers deficit, Wupperthal Original recognizes its own lack of managerial expertise and is striving to better understand markets. Moreover, Original members are developing close, collaborative ties with one another. As one states, “we work together very respectfully and closely. The board doesn’t decide, members decide and we take advantage of each other’s opportunities”.

In the long-term, the cooperative would like to pursue value addition by developing a processing and packaging plant directly in the community in order to generate jobs. As such, it has opened discussions with a Zimbabwean grass-paper producer in order to examine potential for recycling Rooibos byproducts into packaging materials. These developments may spark broader opportunities for the community as a locally based packaging center could be used to promote Rooibos-based tourism as well as help retain youth. More broadly, Wupperthalers have recognized that Rooibos alone cannot guarantee secure livelihoods and are busily developing tourism services. While different Rooibos groups may choose to remain organizationally separate, the community may reconsider possibilities for aligning broader efforts as part of a peace and reconciliation program. Ultimately farmers in Wupperthal and beyond may choose to develop multi-tier Rooibos organizations that will enable independent daily operations and ensure a more equitable resource and information flow, while forming broader umbrella groups to manage certifications, marketing strategies, and project coordination. Farmer leaders may help align efforts by pursuing formal industry representation and by facilitating broad-based

information sharing. Yet to achieve such goals, emerging producers must champion the contributions of all its groups in recognition of the common desire to achieve more sustainable livelihoods. As one respondent notes: “If we work separately or fight then we all lose. We undercut each other’s price and we go nowhere”.

To conclude this section, the notion of standing together became a common refrain during farmer leader project activities as well as in interviews. It must be remembered that emerging communities are struggling to transcend Apartheid-era exclusion by entering commodity networks. It is only natural that tensions should arise but when well-managed, conflict can stimulate innovation and help generate vibrant relational ties (Herring 2009; Paulson et al. 2009). To transcend tensions, cooperatives must reframe their functioning in ways that foster collaborative information exchange and market-access planning. Fairtrade has been designed to facilitate this process as it shortens the commodity chain and shifts more value to the producers; yet most Coloured farmers have yet to reap the benefits of FLO membership and many are unable to garner a basic living from even premium pricing due to critical land shortages. Cooperatives must therefore engage in South African negotiations for land-reform. To improve market access, groups should shore up good business practices and approach processors with projected harvests to proactively negotiate pricing and place orders. Members may also consider other means for value addition—for example via small enterprise development based on product differentiation and the development of Rooibos-based tourism.

Processors, Distributors, and Packagers

During Apartheid, the national government implemented industry control boards that operated according to a set of laws designed to ensure total state authority. Although the Eleven

O'Clock brand first marketed wild Rooibos in 1904, Rooibos was not commercially cultivated until the 1930s (Bramley et al. 2009); thus the development of the industry has largely occurred within the context of concentrated control. Indeed, the Clanwilliam Tea Cooperative formed in 1948 when the National Party came into power, and in 1954, the Ministry of Agriculture restructured this group to institute a Rooibos Control Board (Morton 1983). This group refused Coloured participation and maintained full processing and marketing command until 1993 when it voluntarily pursued deregulation as part of a broader shift toward post-Apartheid reform. Via another round of organizational restructuring, Rooibos Ltd. emerged as a public company predicated upon a farmer-shareholder model. As deregulation enabled competition, some commercial producers left the group to establish their own firms (Bramley et al. 2009).

Decentralization has diversified industry participation. Large companies generally do not grow their own Rooibos, but a number of commercial farmers have instituted small processing firms to brand and distribute their own tea, some of which is purchased from smaller producers. However, Whites continue to command the industry which remains monopolistic in orientation. Not only does Rooibos Ltd. Capture about 90 percent of domestic sales and 75 percent of exports (Bramley et al. 2009), only a few processors possess pasteurization machinery—meaning that all tea must flow through these firms. Processors also play a crucial brokerage role as most directly distribute to domestic and international markets. While reforms have opened the industry to Coloured producers who first harvested wild Rooibos and who were involved in early cultivation efforts, this group has survived a grim legacy of total market exclusion (Binns et al. 2007). Many emerging famers lack production resources and market knowledge and their prospects continue to be shaped by powerful industry interests. Whereas privatization may have advanced the industry as a whole, deregulation has not necessarily benefitted Coloured farmers who now must

compete on unequal footing with those who historically have possessed the ability to access markets, land, and cheap labor simply because of the color of their skin. That said, numerous industry firms recognize racial inconsistencies and are actively assisting emerging farmer groups. This section highlights their efforts and details their insights.

Nieuwoudtville Rooibos Ltd.

Nieuwoudtville Rooibos Ltd. is a recently established state-owned company that purchases tea from regional growers, including Rooikastert farmers. At time of research, the company was continuing infrastructure investments and employed a staff of five people, including a project farmer leader. During the harvest season, the company has been hiring approximately 30-35 workers to help process the tea that it acquires. Whereas the government has invested extensive funding to develop operations, the purchased tea has remained in storage; thus the firm will have to be careful not to flood markets with stockpiled tea once it does begin sales. Despite its slow market entry, the firm has regularly paid farmers for their crop within two months of receipt. As it is backed by government funding, it is likely to become a major industry actor if it successfully enters tea markets. Indeed, Nieuwoudtville's size and technology rival that of Rooibos Ltd. It is unclear whether or not Heiveld—which possesses the largest population of emerging farmers in the area—will ever sell to Nieuwoudtville as the cooperative maintains its own fairtrade and organic certified tea court and maintains well-established trading links with national and global buyers. Moreover, Nieuwoudtville's placement at the northern end of the GCBC puts the firm at distance from many Rooibos farmers. Yet the firm has provided a steady source of income to Rooikastert farmers and should it develop reasonable transportation

arrangements with Wupperthal farmers further to the south, it may provide this large emerging farmer population with an alternative sales choice.

Rooibos Ltd.

As South Africa's largest Rooibos processor and exporter, Rooibos Ltd. is the privatized offshoot of the previous Control Board and remains centrally based in Clanwilliam. It is a public company that operates in conjunction with shareholders, and these include smallholder organizations. According to industry respondents, Rooibos Ltd. has secured multiple certifications, including fairtrade, four organic certifications, Rainforest Alliance, and UTZ. It sends organic tea to the Pacific Rim, North America, and India and sells fairtrade tea to Europe and North America. In terms of its broader markets, Rooibos Ltd. maintains an agent in the U.S. who distributes its tea directly to regional buyers. According to the company, the market demand for FLO-certified tea is approximately 300 tons,¹⁹ which is quite small in relation to total sales. Commercial farms possess the capacity to produce large volumes of fairtrade tea—some can meet the total demand from their yearly yields. As such, certified production has vastly outstripped demand. Had FLO restricted Rooibos to smallholders, production and market balance would have been achieved, but given commercial entry, my respondents question how emerging farmers will be able to compete in an arena where only a few buyers are specifically seeking smallholder tea.

In 2010, Rooibos Ltd. bought 35 tons of tea from Heiveld and 71 tons from Wupperthal Small Farmers Cooperative. It paid fairtrade premiums to certified Heiveld, but also paid decertified Wupperthal sums slightly above its base pricing within one week of receipt.

¹⁹ Rooibos Ltd. notes that total smallholder production approximates 250 tons per annum.

Decertification has harmed Wupperthal's prospects. Rooibos Ltd.'s Technical Manager took farmer leaders on a tour of its facility and showed them the Wupperthal tea that the company had previously stockpiled in its storehouse. According to him, the group still had fairtrade and organic certification when the firm bought this tea, but the cooperative needed fast money so Rooibos Ltd. bought 263 tons on consignment at conventional prices and agreed to pay the difference whenever it received a fairtrade order. Wupperthal subsequently lost certification and Rooibos Ltd. is now unable to sell this tea to fairtrade markets. As my respondent states, the firm bought the tea to help emerging farmers and this arrangement was working well. If decertification had not occurred, the tea would have been sold and the farmers would have made more money.²⁰

Despite difficulties, Rooibos Ltd. has continued to support emerging Rooibos farmer market access. More recently the firm has begun purchasing Driefontein tea in order to promote emerging farmer development and it has explicitly linked itself to their new website with the following claim:

Rooibos Ltd supports the transformation brought about by this fair trade initiative and the management and technical skills transfer that takes place as there is a lack of government support in rural areas. They would also welcome similar initiatives as it benefits the entire Rooibos industry, all the stakeholders as well as the environment. (Driefontein 2011b)

During time of research, the firm was likewise involved with our farmer leaders. Not only did Rooibos Ltd. provide the project team with space in which to conduct PAToT sessions, the company's Technical Manager facilitated certain sessions— including field training on organic

²⁰ Organic certification remains valid after point of sale, but fairtrade decertification may impact tea that has begun its move up the value chain.

farming. He also attended post-session dinners and even put on a braai for the project team at the end of training.

Somewhat less recently, he collaborated with farmers to determine land values based on estimated yields and crop quality. In 2000, he began mapping all of the GCBC land suitable for Rooibos production. In Wupperthal, he involved farmers who were struggling to generate the field history records required by organic certifiers. Although mapping is now complete, field histories require research that must be conducted on a yearly basis if records are to be properly maintained. While there is an excellent opportunity for the farmer leaders to fulfill this function, the question is who will be responsible for record maintenance. Normally, this function would fall within the purview of a cooperative, but within Wupperthal, farmers have now separated into different groups and this may make it difficult to maintain a complete community map, particularly if this function is to be remunerated. Nevertheless, Rooibos Ltd. states that it would appreciate the opportunity to assist farmers by sharing techniques, running information through the system, and providing aggregate information back to the communities. If farmer leaders can organize in order to collect updated field histories for their communities, this group may select one person to further work with Rooibos Ltd. to record changes. By collaborating with a major processing firm to develop volume projections, farmer leaders and their communities may generate the information necessary to more effectively develop market strategies.

Kings Products

Kings Products is an independent commercial farm and processing firm located in the western slope of the GCBC. In the 1980s, its founder worked as the Production Manager for the Control Board and as a graduate student, he conducted Rooibos pasteurization research with a

research team. At that time, the industry was experiencing a salmonella outbreak and after investigating various sterilization methods, chose to mandate pasteurization. When the industry later decentralized in the early 1990s, Kings developed processing capacity by working with a team of engineers and likeminded commercial farmers to develop their own processing machinery. The company was among the first to break the Rooibos monopoly and sought business differentiation by becoming a niche exporter. It currently processes, packs, and exports tea to European, North American, and Asian markets, and while European buyers provide its largest client base, Kings also supplies the African-American market via Alafia tea.

When Kings formed, a German buyer noted that the farm was tilling virgin soil and suggested organic certification. Organic tea was profitable in the 1990s, but as more farmers certified, the pricing premium largely disappeared. According to my respondent, organic certification now has become a bureaucratic necessity: it remains important in terms of maintaining buyers, but no longer provides much economic benefit given the cost of compliance. That said, Kings continues to pursue organic innovation. It has begun investing in organic olive production research and claims to be conducting its own organic Rooibos seedling tests. The company is unhappy with SARC's attempts to develop viable organic seeds as it feels that farmers should be included in research efforts given their intimate knowledge of the crop. At the same time, it prefers to remain wholly independent in its own research endeavors. While the firm recognizes the importance of commodity networking, it feels some businesses should remain separate from industry efforts in order to serve the role of industry watchdog. Whereas networks may efficiently achieve common goals, they run the risk of becoming controlled by powerful entities.

Kings Products has been involved in Wupperthal throughout its cooperative building years. It has processed Wupperthal tea and helped facilitate sales, though it does not wish to engage deeply in such efforts as the firm does not maintain fairtrade certification. It has also assisted in cooperative projects and in 2010, financed a tractor and cutting machine for Wupperthal Original to help this group develop tea court operations. The company believes that as Wupperthal farmers develop competent organizational capacity, the communities will have everything they need to become a global success story. As it states, “Wupperthal needs leaders who are from Wupperthal, yet who understand global markets and are able to effectively unite community members”. Kings Products also believes that clients have a responsibility to maintain long-term trading relationships with disadvantaged groups who are struggling to develop business expertise. It notes that fairtrade buyers profit from certified tea and therefore have a responsibility to support their production base when difficulties arise.

Cape Natural Tea Products

Cape Natural Tea Products (CNTP) also was one of the first processing firms to begin in South Africa after Control Board dissolution. It collaborated with other farmers to develop processing technology prior to opening in Cape Town in 1996 under a farmer shareholder model. The company subsequently has morphed into a commercial company that deals in other products and buys raw material more broadly. According to my respondent, it conducts business with diverse buyer groups: approximately 60 percent of its tea is domestically sold and 40 percent is destined for export to Europe, North America, Russia, or Asia. The company’s Managing Director states that the Chinese market remains small but offers tremendous growth potential. Sri Lanka is also increasingly important because it has been developing a tea processing hub to

maximize trade efficiency. This hub will enable Sri Lanka to capture value addition by processing and blending imported teas directly at the port before final shipment, minimizing cost and customs redundancy.

CNTP notes that different markets generate multiple types of buyers. European markets represent a concentrated center where importers maintain tight relationships with one another and their local customers. However, due to recent transformations in global telecommunications, local buyers have begun to seek direct trade relationships with sellers; thus competitive advantage is increasingly salient. In North America, markets are more diffuse as there are fewer middlemen and this helps to facilitate efficient trade. At the same time, American buyers know what they want and drive hard bargains and these demands can drive prices to unsustainable levels. A second difficulty with U.S. markets is that many of the traders in this region tend to be naïve in regards to standards and regulations as well as internationally recognized legal procedures. As CNTP states, there are differing guidelines in which exporters and buyers must negotiate when developing a business contract, but U.S. traders are not necessarily familiar with international terms which can lead to complications. A third concern is that North American markets have particular packaging regulations. Some packaging claims may cause customs to refuse the shipment and exporters incur high costs when products are returned to port of origin; thus exporters must research these to prevent costly mistakes.

CNTP maintains multiple certifications, including various organic certifications, and fairtrade. Approximately 20 percent of CNTP's existing clients are interested in sustainable and ethically produced tea and while this number may appear low, CNTP believes this figure represents a rising trend as new clients are more interested in these teas than are traditional buyers. The company states that certifications will eventually become production qualifiers, but

to date, systems operate independently and require a great deal of time, money, and quality assurance training as extensive documentation must be scrupulously maintained. CNTP's Managing Director maintains the Right Rooibos portfolio, and envisions a day when Right Rooibos certification may be employed to streamline multiple standards. To achieve this, the industry mark would need to be set at a higher level than international standards; yet this would greatly enhance market efficiency and help shift competitive advantage to the production arena.

At time of research, emerging small farmer tea sales comprised two and a half percent of total CNTP turnover but my respondent noted that this figure was rapidly growing. In terms of fairtrade, less than two percent of total turnover represented certified value. CNTP's smallholder fairtrade producers included the Heiveld and Wupperthal Original cooperatives and while the company has purchased some tea from fairtrade commercial farmers, it feels the introduction of hired-labor standards has limited the potential for emerging producers to differentiate. Given the context of Apartheid and post-Apartheid reconciliation, CNTP believes South African fairtraders must prioritize emerging farmer concerns. At the same time, it notes that significant market opportunities remain available to emerging farmers, though realizing these will require strong leadership and interest group alignment.

CNTP supports community-based agriculture via its relationship with the Strandveld Cooperative. The company helped secure Shell Foundation funding to develop Rooibos production in this area and the firm remains committed to collaboration. The Managing Director recognizes that "business ownership must shift to Black and Coloured hands". Emerging producers must therefore gain the ability to compete on commercial footing and engagement should be business focused rather than dependency oriented. Because the Strandveld possesses the capacity to become a large-scale Rooibos supplier, the company believes fairtrade

certification would limit its growth potential. Though fairtrade has begun to expand into domestic markets, sales largely occur within the export sector where volumes are relatively low, and strict producer designations may lock marginal farmers into smallholder production, exacerbating structural inequalities. According to CNTP, emerging farmers require technical assistance, but they have the capacity to grow excellent quality tea; thus there is no reason why they should not pursue full commercialization. Moreover, quality is being defined in increasingly complex ways and producer groups should specialize to meet these demands. In other words, market positioning strategies should be tailored to optimize production strengths.

Finally, in terms of internal operations, the company has pursued a visionary management model. CNTP states that in retrospect, developing and assembling the processing equipment was easy compared to developing effective management systems. Company production, quality assurance, and financial management systems must interface well to prevent error. CNTP engages a smart management team to determine sources of conflict and develop action plans to better integrate bureaucratic functioning. This is a lengthy process that requires long-term planning, and it is difficult to implement within the context of globalization where short- and mid-term planning are critical for survival. Yet CNTP believes personnel investment is necessary to succeed in rapidly evolving markets; thus the company prioritizes capacity building and scores well on BBBEE requirements. In pursuing diversification goals, CNTP views challenges as surmountable dilemmas. As such, its management team has developed an internal scorecard system to identify core company strengths and prioritize problem solving in areas that remain weak. Emerging farmer entities may learn from CNTP's expertise in bureaucratic management in order to strengthen their own organizational systems.

Fair Packers

I now turn to the complicated Fair Packers story. In the early 2000s, three entities joined ranks to develop an emerging farmer packaging venture, and these comprised: (1) a contract packager who was interested in entering the industry, (2) Heiveld Cooperative with support by EMG, and (3) Wupperthal Small Farmers Association. The latter two were entering formal fairtrade markets and wished to develop direct packaging and export capacity via BEE job creation. The venture first came into being when an entrepreneur developed a home business to sell fine African teas. At that time, he sought to develop a number of Rooibos tea products under a new brand and to incorporate Rooibos items. The business expanded into a packaging company which would enable it to enter already established global markets, and the entrepreneur met with a number of multinational fairtrade importers to discuss the potential for packaging export-ready tea directly within South Africa.

By the mid-2000s the burgeoning firm had developed a small client base and was focused on supporting fairtrade growth. Thus it bought tea from Wupperthal and Heiveld to contract package for fair northern markets. The company began to work with processing firms dealing in the smallholder sector, namely TopQualiTea which had previously engaged with the emerging Rooibos communities. This group provided advance payment for packaging orders and Fair Packers developed a banking strategy to manage financial oversight. The processing-packaging relationship proved successful as it enabled Fair Packers to rapidly expand its international client base and begin strengthening farmer, processing, and packaging relationships. After a series of multilateral commodity network meetings the three Fair Packers entities united, opened Cape Town factory, and hired people from the member communities who were struggling to find employment in the cities. The firm instituted a board and divided ownership shares equally

between the three founding entities, with the entrepreneur packager leading daily operations. According to him, the company was always meant to be a business model rather than a development approach; thus it did not receive governmental assistance and had to meet market requirements from the start.

The overseas clients were primarily interested in questions concerning producer support and wished to directly engage with emerging producers during the tea buying process. The various interest groups involved in the venture dialogued to develop a unified agenda that would address common market access issues. The agenda was to generate a fairtrade small farmer brand that would align interests and reduce unproductive smallholder competition. To streamline organizational functioning, the firm adopted the following regulations: (1) equal one-third ownership; (2) the company would only employ Heiveld and Wupperthal community members; (3) the board would make decisions based on a one-third voting system; and (4) each of the one-third owners would equally invest in business start-up. The packager invested personal funds for equipment and the shareholders agreement was provided to the cooperative boards in Afrikaans; thus instituting Fair Packers in 2005, shortly after Wupperthal received fairtrade certification.

The business model was highly innovative and lauded in fairtrade markets as an ideal organizational structure for such a collective enterprise; yet financial issues and operational weaknesses hindered its ability to function effectively. The packager was relatively new to the business and naïve in regards to market potential; the Production Manager he hired had never worked with a computer; Wupperthal was unable to pay its full entry fee and joined the system via tea contributions set at premium prices, meaning it would not be able to garner income from the venture for some time; and Heiveld needed to maintain its own interests. According to EMG, Heiveld sales were confined by Fair Packers membership as the cooperative became locked into

a sole processing firm. While this assisted with certification expenses, it disallowed the Heiveld from developing trading relations with buyers offering more lucrative prices. Thus, relationships were complex and intertwined. Due to rancorous infighting, the packager took an extended leave of absence, and moved with his family to a fairly remote community in the Eastern Cape, where they assisted with a small lemongrass project near a fair trade eco-tourism enterprise. Back in Cape Town, the situation went from bad to worse and ultimately the packager returned to discuss settlement terms. He borrowed money to buy out the two-third shares in order to prevent total liquidation and reinstate the business as fully privatized company and the firm lost fairtrade certification.

After restructuring, Fair Packers shifted its market positioning and expanded into other teas. As 90 percent of Fair Packers client base previously had consisted of fairtrade clients, the company has had to develop an entirely new client base, and at time of research the company was pursuing a number of market growth opportunities. According to the packager, the firm now has adequate commercial investment and a strong board that requires sound business decision-making. The company has developed plans to purchase new machinery and is interested in maintaining an ethical business model, albeit without fairtrade certification. Meanwhile, emerging producers are continuing to compete for market-access because there simply is not enough land or capital to go around, and more localized and independent packaging remains a value-added hope for many.

As discouraging as the Fair Packers story may appear there remains a lot to admire about the arrangement. The business model was visionary and had markets been in a more lucrative phase, the company may have been better equipped to face the many challenges it faced. Second, the story demonstrates the degree of emerging farmer support and collaboration that was

occurring within the broader industry. South African commercial tradition includes cooperatives, but these are larger and operate more like independent business than the cooperative structures mandated by the fairtrade model. As such, it is difficult for independently-minded people to organizationally integrate to the degree required by FLO. Many within the industry would like the freedom to develop hybrid cooperative models that can efficiently commercialize emerging farmer endeavors. Indeed, Rooibos Ltd. believes that cooperatives should not run farmer's lives because gatekeeping can only marginalize producers from an industry where firms wish to deal directly with farmers rather than having to go through big brother for permission. As one industry representative states: "farmers are essentially business entrepreneurs and cannot grow their businesses if they do not make direct connections with actors at multiple levels in the value chain," Whereas investment has occurred within emerging communities, the situation has not yet improved: emerging producer market growth and job creation remains sluggish. Yet despite these constraints some emerging farmers have successfully commercialized; indeed, one former farmworker has joined the ranks of the 20 largest Rooibos farmers. Ultimately emerging farmers have the capacity to succeed—even without support—but they must first believe in their ability to achieve success.

To conclude this section, challenges remain severe but numerous processing, packaging, and trade firms are increasingly invested in emerging farmer support. Moreover, the telecommunications revolution is enabling value chain actors to cut out international firms that charge large fees to simply trade tea between groups at opposite ends. As buyers and sellers are now able to connect directly, secrecy, protectionism, and unilateralism are becoming less profitable. Markets now require real value addition at each commodity chain level, for without it efficiency cannot be achieved. Twenty-first century competition does not require the exclusion

of historically disadvantaged groups; indeed, economic, environmental, and social sustainability cannot occur without their direct participation, and progressive businesses recognize this.

Given the challenges faced by Fair Packers, no one I met wishes to develop another multi-party packaging arrangement; however, failures are lessons learned for the incoming generation of entrepreneurs. Future collaborations may be predicated upon South Africa's more traditional public company model whereby larger numbers of individual farmers and farmer groups hold shares, but operate independently. Emerging entities wish to develop packaging capacity within their own communities, and while some network respondents feel that such localized strategies would fail to meet industrial conventions, there is no reason why a hybrid system cannot be developed. In such a scenario, smallholder processing and packaging firms would form along the same lines as individual commercial farms have done. These would operate independently, but collaborate on production and market research initiatives as well as co-develop broader marketing campaigns that promote the product differentiation of participating groups. Such multifaceted ventures would likely appeal to a broader trade audience and thus offer the potential for deeper market penetration. Yet capacity building does not happen in a day. To achieve multilateral goals, long-term training and improved communication between all network actors are necessary. Fairtraders are developing multi-tier organizational protocols to facilitate such growth, and SARC may help develop next steps by collaborating with these actors to promote commercial emerging farmer linkages in order to position the industry as a sustainability pioneer.

Industry Networking

SARC began in the early 2000s when the Department of Trade and Industry commissioned a Rooibos study, signifying a broader shift in government policy from company-based support to industry-focused engagement. In 2004, the study consultant released a report that noted commercial interest in developing an industry body, and its steering committee comprised agricultural research specialists, NGOs, and various industry representatives who organized to determine a course of action. After reviewing other industry networks to learn various governance mechanisms, the committee presented the industry with network-formation recommendations which included a SARC mission statement, umbrella objectives, and a proposed board structure. The industry approved SARC formation in 2005 at which time the Rooibos consultant took on a management role and the group held elections for its first board.

Board members manage an assortment of industry portfolios that have been developed to promote industry unification and growth. According to my respondent, whereas board members may choose to run for re-election or retire from their position at annual AGMs, SARC designates certain posts for open nomination to ensure fresh involvement. At time of research, board positions included: (1) two farmer posts, including a commercial and an emerging farmer position; (2) two processor posts, albeit limited to those who pasteurize tea as these form natural industry bottlenecks; (3) two marketer posts, which ideally should include one domestic market and one export market, though portfolios change; (4) a social development facilitator post; and (5) a BEE Coordinator post. The social development facilitator post is meant to serve the interest of farmworkers, but remains unfilled as it poses a dilemma. SARC designed this post to represent farmworker interests, but some feel that diverse farmworker groups cannot achieve full representation via one elected position, and the BEE Coordinator and emerging farmer posts face

similar concerns. These latter two have previously been filled, but little was achieved; thus SARC directly collaborated with this project as it has recognized the necessity for farmer leadership training. As a result of our collaboration, the emerging farmer post now has been filled by a farmer leader with another operating as his deputy.

SARC's board members require in-depth Rooibos knowledge as they manage industry development portfolios. It also helps if there is a connection between an individual board member's business and the portfolio that she or he manages because members are not paid for their service. Board members may be reimbursed for travel, but SARC is concerned that many emerging farmers and farmworkers are too busy to accept additional work without pay, and this constraint may limit their ability to more equitably participate in SARC governance.

Nevertheless, the Portfolios' Manager hopes to advance the emerging farmer portfolio. Indeed, she wishes to see emerging farmer representation in all of SARC's portfolios, although such an effort will require long-term planning.

Some portfolios are easy to get involved with but others are quite complex. For example, SARC's health portfolio is quite complicated as this research is quite scientific and difficult to follow. At the same time, health studies are critical in terms of advancing industry interests because scientific findings can be used to determine the veracity of industry claims, and strengthen marketing potential. Thus SARC feels industry-wide capacity building must occur to ensure that all actors can become involved in portfolio discussions. Within the emerging farmer sector, SARC is interested in strengthening its connection to this project's numerous farmer leaders in order to advance information exchange. Moreover, as farmer leaders represent numerous communities, SARC's emerging farmer board member may draw from his relations

with other farmer leaders in order to effectively represent his diverse constituency, and a similar strategy may be developed in terms of farmworker representation.

SARC states that there are many ways in which BEE direction may take shape. Formal BBEE protocols generally work in large and historically conservative sectors such as agriculture and mining, and White farm owners often interpret AgriBEE as a regulatory system that will ultimately require them to sell off their heritage rather than handing it down to next-generation family members. SARC is a voluntary organization and cannot enforce industry change, but this network may facilitate information exchange and promote correct understanding regarding the differing BEE models, goals, and objectives. Moreover, the Portfolios' Manager states that numerous industry actors are interested in BEE opportunities. For example, SARC notes the potential for branding BEE tea in order to offer pricing premiums to firms that adhere to BBEE protocols. To promote such opportunities, the network collects Rooibos success stories as well as case studies from other industries to determine potential market approaches. It states that the Rooibos industry has been undergoing a great deal of social transformation via BBEE commercial projects and fairtrade cooperative formation. These changes are stimulating multifaceted opportunities for both farmers and firms because diverse groups may meet market targets through preferential procurement. SARC is well positioned to help facilitate dialogue between diverse interests as such engagement continues to expand.

SARC has pursued a number of broader research and industry initiatives that are of interest to its emerging farmer constituency. First, the group is pursuing Geographic Indicator (GI) status for Rooibos to protect its heritage as an indigenous South African product. At time of research, SARC was in the process of submitting a formal application. If approved, this would represent a major industry milestone by limiting production to South Africa's unique *fynbos*

environment. While this would enable the participation of Strandveld farmers, the GI seal would prevent entities from marketing internationally produced tea under the name of Rooibos or Red Bush. According to SARC, this move is critical as other countries are testing this product, and their entry into markets would destabilize South African production. Indeed, the commercial *protea* flower market is now dominated by international producers though this commodity is likewise indigenous to South African *fynbos*.

A second SARC project of interest is its organic seedling research. Commercial and smallholder producers run the risk of losing organic certification because no one has been able to develop viable organic seeds. To resolve this problem, the network has hired a Stellenbosch-based scientist to lead research, and she has brought in an international team of scientists to develop and run tests. Despite its heavy investment, SARC is unable to meet the full costs involved such research, and states that it would prefer paying farmers to lead this effort. However, SARC's research portfolios are science-driven, and many farmers lack scientific expertise. Before SARC turns control over to commercial and emerging farmers, it needs to be assured that these could manage such a project successfully. Yet at time of research, scientific seedling efforts had not met with success; thus there is potential for farmers and scientists to collaborate together on a solution. For this to occur there would need to be multi-directional training as farmers and scientists speak differing languages and may experience difficulty working with one another. Indeed, during SARC's 2010 AGM, the organic seedling team presented research findings, but many attendees were unable to follow their technical language, and farmer leaders were frustrated because they had hoped to learn details in which their communities could apply. Given such challenges, certain commercial and emerging farmers are

conducting their own tests, and more progress may be made if the different groups share approaches and findings.

Finally, SARC has sought to address regional biodiversity concerns by engaging with the Right Rooibos project. This effort originated in 2006 via GCBC studies that sought to delineate the region's greatest biodiversity threats, and findings noted the disappearance of rare regional flora, in part due to growing Rooibos production. The GCBC and Cape Nature approached SARC to share environmental concerns with the industry and these groups collaborated to develop an action plan which led to the formation of the Rooibos Biodiversity Initiative. At this time, actors developed a set of guidelines for Rooibos farmers and conducted baseline audits with farms to develop environmental management plans. Initially the initiative offered industry certification, but bureaucratic complications surrounding water and land usage certificates restricted this process. Thus, the initiative changed direction and began integrating market considerations with biodiversity protection. In 2008, Right Rooibos launched as a market-based sustainability initiative and began assisting certifiers in Rooibos standards development. At time of research, the initiative was in the process of developing its own third-party certification system that would resolve producer difficulties. Multiple audits are both time consuming and costly, and producers must separate their tea into different standards and certifications; thus Right Rooibos felt a stringent industry-wide system would streamline auditing and eliminate the need for such traceability requirements. When developing its approach, initiative actors examined successful wine biodiversity efforts which now include an industry-wide traceability seal. However, the push to develop Right Rooibos certification has stalled. According to my respondent: "SARC has for the time being decided not to go with Right Rooibos certification unless there is a clear market demand for the Right Rooibos label due to a perceived lack of

resources”. However, Right Rooibos is continuing to work with other certifiers to ensure sustainability alignment, and it continues to promote regulatory streamlining.

While the future direction of this sustainability initiative remains unclear, Right Rooibos clearly states that while it is industry-based, the initiative is not a CSR effort. It believes that internal monitoring systems lack transparency, and that third-party oversight is necessary in order to ensure industry credibility; thus the initiative will continue to prioritize third-party approaches. Right Rooibos states that certification systems are problematic, but necessary, and industry groups need to make systems work in their favor. Indeed, industries cannot change practices or behaviors without retaining some degree of control over the broader value chain, and Right Rooibos believes that this is only possible through the development of flexible regulatory frameworks that can adapt to fluctuating market demand.

Ultimately, for certification systems to deliver on their promises, actors must transcend longstanding dilemmas. This requires industry-wide extension training and support. As such, Right Rooibos is interested in working with farmer leaders to develop workshops and align efforts. It wishes to pursue funding to develop a data collection extension training program for emerging farmers to test different production approaches and determine good practices. This information may be captured in an online recordkeeping system in which farmers may access and supply production information including rainfall rates and farm yields. Such a system has already been developed although only a few commercial farmers were participating at time of research, and there would need to be telecommunications infrastructure as well as training investment within emerging communities to enable them to participate.

Right Rooibos believes that effective monitoring and evaluation systems will prove the case for sustainability. Twenty first-century markets are increasingly driven by standards and

certifications; thus, industry success requires multilateral partnerships. To build a solid bargaining position, commodity network actors must generate solution-driven approaches to technical support. Right Rooibos recognizes that different industry perspectives are critical as it believes fresh opinions can inform novel solutions to longstanding problems; thus a primary benefit of industry regulation is that this enables multilateral groups to coordinate efforts on a more equitable playing field. In other words, farmers and farmworkers represent a production base that requires respect. Certification systems can facilitate the development of trust-based relationships by opening forums to redress structural power relations and generate more effective bureaucratic mechanisms to maximize production and trade efficiency. According to my Right Rooibos informant “labels are merely a means to an end. The ultimate goal is for farmers [and broader industry actors] to implement sustainability standards not because a label requires it, but because this makes good business sense”.

In sum, as an umbrella network, SARC has been actively pursuing industry alignment. As this and other network entities move forward, greater levels of participation must be extended to emerging Rooibos producers and farmworkers. At the same time, actors must view producer support within the context of multi-directional information sharing and action planning in order to minimize structural inequalities. Indeed, one industry respondent states that “support needs to be given gently and at a distance so that farmers lead efforts themselves rather than being controlled by outside experts”. More broadly, the expense and complication of multiple audits is constraining market-access potential. While Right Rooibos has retreated from its original goal to secure industry-wide certification, this strategy may be revisited as such a move may provide the industry with greater network leverage. As post-Fordist markets are largely driven by buyer demands, an industry seal may help balance value chain functioning, enabling producers and

buyers to harmonize efforts. While some industry actors recognize industry networking potential, these must continue to support progressive alignment. By collaborating to streamline bureaucratic protocols and guidelines, industry groups may more effectively position themselves to meet differential market demands.

Intersecting Conditions, Problems, and Opportunities

Table 5.4 summarizes the interlocking dimensions facing the Rooibos industry as it strives to improve commodity networking protocols.

Table 5.4: Commodity Network Intersectionality

Analysis	Democracy	Bureaucracy	Stratification
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic board structures • Lack of emerging farmer representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple standards and certifications • Expensive and time consuming • Redundancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging producers remain at periphery • Poverty • Lack of land
Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependency • Distrust • Conflict • Unproductive competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational inefficiency • Managerial incapacity • Ineffective communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural inequalities • Monopolism • Poor infrastructure • Inequitable access • Networking costs
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust engagement • Progressive governance • Leadership development • Information exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry alignment • Bureaucratic streamlining • Leadership building • Business management training • Action planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community development • Market and product differentiation • BBBEE • Land reform • Multilateral networking

The Rooibos industry has well-established markets, and given its progressive engagement, this small network has expanded into multiple standards and certifications in a brief period of time. Progressive Rooibos actors are innovating organizational approaches to transcend

production and market barriers and realize sustainable industry growth, and many of these are supporting emerging farmer involvement. However, the picture remains far from rosy: structural inequalities, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a culture of unproductive competition all constrain trading relations.

Whereas fairtrade and other third-party certification systems seek to reform conventional markets, improved commodity networking may help ameliorate the multilateral challenges wrought by such broad-based growth. Within the fairtrade sector, global conflicts regarding producer designations are failing to improve emerging farmer prospects. At the same time, numerous fairtraders are aware of this issue, and South Africans in particular are developing mechanisms to support diversity. Moreover, post-Apartheid actors possess a strong sense of democracy and community decision-making is robust. Whereas this dynamism has led to a series of cooperative conflicts, communities may nevertheless harness their own leadership. Simply put, emerging farmers must take charge of assistance in order to ensure that the delivered support meets their needs, and the industry wants this to happen. At the same time, many emerging farmers have been shuttled between differing support groups that have not always effectively communicated with one another. Some producers believe they are powerless and have grown to trust outside experts to manage their affairs, yet these same farmers are willing to state their concerns to those who take the time to get to know them. Processing firms may deepen their relations with this important production base by directly training community leadership in business management and networking protocol. In return, emerging producers may share their knowledge of production and market-access conditions.

There have been tensions between processors and farmers due to South Africa's rocky history. Various groups are working to transcend inequalities, but it must be remembered that

Apartheid-based legislation stripped South African people of color of their humanity and taught all racial groups to view Whites as superior. Tensions are exacerbated when external actors inform community members what to do, and top-down projects that rely on dominant/subordinate relationships are likely to reinforce trauma. Some within the industry argue that Wupperthal has developed a culture of dependency and that this has opened the community to victimization. One of my informants stated that “poor communities will take any opportunity that has the potential to lead somewhere”. Yet, farmers are not the only ones who exhibit a sense of dependency: traders, certifiers, support agencies, and researchers alike depend upon the presumed needs of producers for their own livelihoods; thus, multidirectional training is critical. External specialists must be willing to face unconscious assumptions and work with emerging farmers to establish partnerships in which co-learning may occur. Finally, future project cycles should incorporate commercial producers. Some industry representatives note that impoverished White producers remain at the industry periphery. The question of White emerging farmers may be a contentious one, but farmer leaders readily recognized the potential for interracial collaboration, and PCNR may help facilitate this process.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the relations, agendas, and goals of differing groups comprising the emerging Rooibos industry. The industry is restructuring, and as producer and labor groups expand their presence in network AGMs and boards, they are forming a critical voice. The rapid proliferation of standards and certifications may represent a preliminary shift from post-Fordism to polycentric trade regulation as these alternative trade systems seek to incorporate civil society into governance and ensure transparent and accountable business practices (Scholte 2011).

Figure 5.2 illustrates ideal nodes comprising a broad-based commodity network. This drawing is an ideal type, but the concept of nodes enables researchers to determine the points of poverty and wealth as well as to map training and resource flows (Nadvi and Barrientos 2004). PAR protocols may further improve prospects for diffuse network governance.

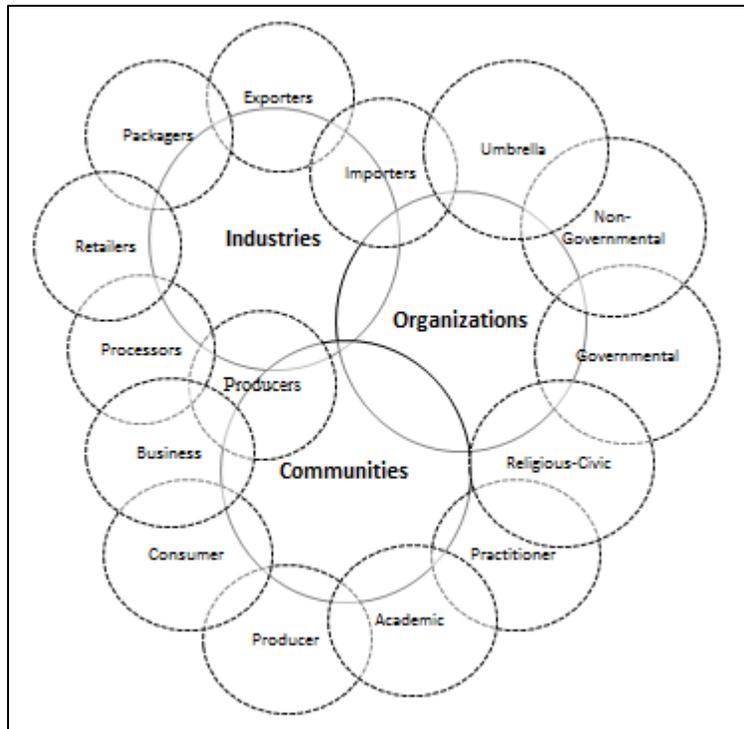


Figure 5.2: Commodity Networking for Polycentric Governance

The topic of structural inequality remains politically challenging, but there is emerging industry consensus that while relational ties remain inequitable, producers and processors face similar opportunities and constraints. There is also a marked desire to reach across traditional divisions to construct a model for sustainable engagement. Progressive networks have formed and the industry is striving to drive Rooibos market trends via the development of voluntary sustainability directives. This industry does not merely represent a post-Fordist value chain

where Northern buyers dictate production requirements; rather it is comprised of a jittery, but converging commodity network. Ongoing quality differentiation may help balance market and industrial requirements with domestic and civic conventions, and as certification systems engage differing symbolic and material values to achieve their ends, the prospect of global trade regulation appears to be flexible, voluntary, and diffuse rather than monolithic and rigid. Whereas a critical theorist would note the potential for elite cooptation, the pluralist understands the underlying potential of diffuse global governance with its plethora of interest groups, and ultimately both perspectives are correct for the existence of cooptation does not negate the presence of agency.

To conclude, stark inequalities remain within South Africa's emerging Rooibos sector, but social change is occurring, and this change is personal as well as institutional. In many regards, White Afrikaaner and Coloured communities derive from one large family, alternately united and divided through centuries of colonial conquest, Anglo-Boer wars, Apartheid-based segregation, and post-Apartheid reunification. These interconnections are visible in terms of shared last names and common language, and in the Rooibos industry's lively interracial relationships which are continuing to expand through business involvement. For all of the structural constraints facing emerging producers and their commodity network cohort, industry groups possess a great deal of agency. To further clarify this structure/agency tension, Table 5.5 repeats the commodity network SWOT-V that I provided at the end of the fair market chapter. The flow of the bullet points in this table may be perceived of as potential steps to certain outcomes, and I ask the reader to locate points of agency within these potential paths. In Chapter Six, I detail the livelihood dimensions facing emerging Rooibos producers, and in particular, note their insights into human agency and the achievement of wellbeing.

Table 5.5: Commodity Network SWOT-V

Analysis	Commodity Network	Fair Markets
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic commodity • Umbrella networks • Multilateral interest groups • Visionary network goals • Value addition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Movement mainstreaming • Sales growth • Multiple regulatory strategies
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication • Lack of coordination • Structural inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protectionist attitudes • Northern control • Producer dependency
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capabilities • Progressive network • Democratic procedures • Network PIE/PAP • Producer-industry support • Value chain integration • Coordinated growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology • Conscious consumerism • Multiple approaches • Unifying core values • Integrated networking • Polycentric regulation • Fair market growth
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatile market prices • Shifting buyers • Monopolism and secrecy • Multiple audits • High export costs • Structural inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural inequalities • Ideological rigidity • Ineffective regulation • Movement conflicts • Movement cooptation • Multilateral dependency
Vision	Emerging farmer fair-market access and industry representation for an integrated and responsive Rooibos value chain	

CHAPTER SIX: PARTICIPATING ROOIBOS COMMUNITIES

Introduction

During my time in South Africa, I found that local development circles tend to discuss agrarian reform from within a framework of social upliftment. According to The Free Dictionary (2012), the verb ‘uplift’ is defined as “the act, process, or result of raising or lifting up” either in the social sense of raising “to a higher social, intellectual, or moral level or condition”, or in the personal sense of raising “to spiritual or emotional heights” as in achieving exalted states of being. While some participatory experts may view the social interpretation as uncomfortably paternalistic, in the context of post-Apartheid South Africa, the term also imbues the second, more personal meaning. Until quite recently, the majority of South Africans were excluded from commercial participation and forced into a life of menial labor, and less-advantaged groups now are demanding the managerial training so long denied them. As many emerging farmers are pursuing entrepreneurial growth to secure financial independence, the argument that market-based development initiatives represent a form of imposed assimilation is overly facile; yet underlying assumptions regarding dominance and subordination make this domain sensitive to inquiry. Scholarship thereby lacks an analysis of "the dynamics of change and the underlying processes which might explain why some producers are more 'commercially-focused' or 'commercial-ready' than others" (Cousins 2010: 9).

The lingering backdrop of colonialism, modernization, and dependency undergird contemporary globalization processes (Hoogvelt 2001), and in South Africa, non-White development has been stymied by decades of Apartheid-based exclusion (Hoogeveen and Özler

2005). Entrenched inequalities have hindered producers of color from obtaining commercial success, but during my fieldwork, I found that many emerging Rooibos farmers did not wish to dwell on racial disparities, and were instead focused on the potential for economic growth. Alternative standards and certifications such as fairtrade comprise a form of counter-hegemonic globalization that ideally is driven from below (Evans 2005; Murray and Reynolds 2007). Despite their relative lack of managerial expertise, emerging Rooibos farmers are striving to realize this potential. Moreover, South African development efforts are seeking to bring underrepresented groups into networks. Given the rise of polycentric governance in fair trade systems (Scholte 2011), there is potential for grassroots leaders to shape actions and inform outcomes by forging innovative partnerships that would not have been possible mere decades ago.

My central dissertation goal was to institute a participatory commodity network research (PCNR) approach in order to deepen scholarly understanding of alternative trade networks while actively informing their development. In conducting community-based fieldwork, I sought to understand how certification efforts were impacting farmer livelihoods and involvement. More specifically, I delineated emerging Rooibos producer concerns regarding market access and industry representation. Finally, I actively engaged with participants to determine individual and community capabilities and thereby determine avenues for strengthening project and Rooibos network involvement.

Drawing from semi-structured community-based interviews, this chapter contextualizes the situation facing emerging Rooibos farmers as they seek to maintain traditions while expanding their participation in market and industry networks. In conducting this research, I found that respondents were proud of their cultural heritage and the simple lifestyle their

communities offer. Many respondents have experienced the fractured pace of city life and while they may miss certain material comforts, prefer the freedom, space, and time for reflection that home affords. Indeed, a number of back-to-the-landers have relocated to Rooibos communities to secure better health and vitality. There is certainly hardship and poverty, but people are enterprising, and some have experienced modest upward mobility. What elder residents may lack in formal education, they hold in practical knowledge, skills, and wisdom, and many—particularly the young—have completed secondary education. The farmer leaders have a savvy awareness of social dimensions and the ability to engage in complex analysis, and every farmer that we interviewed taught us something. Thus, while one chapter purpose is to provide insight into development needs, another is to share community insights with broader populations that are seeking to return to a more sustainable way of life.

Community Fieldwork Framework and Methodology

Scholars and practitioners striving to inform more equitable trade systems may benefit from ethnographic studies that better capture producer details and concerns. Numerous scholars have incorporated ethnography into development and globalization studies (Hart 2004; Marcus 1995; Sawyer 2004; Tsing 2005), and theoretical frameworks for reflexive ethnography have been explored (Burawoy 2003). Whereas ethnography is but one method within the qualitative research arena (Creswell 2007), qualitative researchers broadly recognize that any research endeavor “fundamentally involves issues of power” (Rossman and Rallis 1998: 66). As such, they note the importance of objectivity, but recognize the impossibility of total neutrality (Berg 2004; Marshall and Rossman 2011). Participatory proponents further argue that stakeholder exclusion from data collection and analysis does not ensure objectivity; rather, traditional

research strategies exacerbate structural inequalities, particularly in the development arena (Kothari 2001) where mainstream actors continue to employ such dualistic terms as developed/developing and expert/beneficiary when constructing interventions. Within the scholarly arena, top-down research efforts likewise marginalize research participants and the veracity of the reported data may be questionable when analysis is wholly conducted by outside actors. Given these concerns, I integrated ethnographic and participatory approaches into community fieldwork. This helped me gain more holistic understanding while deepening research participation (Mohan 2001; Selener 1997).

The project team did not attempt to drive a particular vision of community development by generating a universal vision of progress. However, we realized that collective actions require a common ethic. The concepts in Nussbaum's list of basic human capabilities—which I presented in Chapter Two—inspired us to build an internal project ethic, and while I focused primarily on uncovering socioeconomic dimensions during the emerging farmer interviews, this list proved instrumental in terms of developing more holistic field research questions. This holistic research approach enabled me to capture community strengths as well as resource deprivations. As many of the findings detailed in this chapter and in Chapter Seven have been framed by the notion of human capabilities, Table 6.1 displays this list again in order to better contextualize this chapter's discussion.

To develop the sampling frame for the community interviews, the farmer leaders and I sought to incorporate difference. This decision was not merely driven by an ethical desire for inclusivity; it also represented a strategy for generating better data. According to methodological theorist Arthur Stinchcombe (2005), social science work fundamentally seeks to explain differences, so good samples should seek difference among units of observation. He further

argues that representative samples are usually not the most efficient design; thus researchers should purposively sample away from the mean. Moreover, specific data collection methods determine the kind of information one will get: surveys capture broad information but radically simplify observations, whereas ethnographic methods penetrate deeply into actions and their context to provide evidence about events as they develop in their natural setting.

Table 6.1: Nussbaum’s Central Capabilities List

Theory	Basic Capabilities	Measurement
	Life	Life expectancy
	Bodily Health	Reproduction; nourishment; shelter
	Bodily Integrity	Free movement; sovereign bodily boundaries; secure against assault/domestic violence; opportunities for sexual satisfaction
	Senses	Imagination and thought; literacy, math, and science; ability to create self-expressive works; freedom of political and artistic expression and religious exercise
	Emotions	Ability to have attachments to things and people; free from overwhelming fear and anxiety
	Practical Reason	Critical reflection about planning one’s life
	Affiliation	Social interaction; freedom of assembly and political speech; self-respect; protection against discrimination; ability to enter into meaningful work relationships
	Other Species	Ability to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and nature
	Play	Ability to play, laugh, and enjoy recreational activities
	Control	Ability to participate in the political choices that govern one’s life; free speech and associations; ability to hold property; freedom to seek employment on equal basis with others; freedom from unwarranted search and seizure

Source: (Nussbaum 2003)

This chapter presents one level of information in which I employed the difference strategy. In the first section I present socioeconomic findings from diverse farmer respondents. Here, the farmer leaders and I interviewed women, men, young adults, the middle-aged, and

elderly; we talked with an emerging middle class as well as with the extremely poor; and we reached those in far-flung hamlets as well as respondents more centrally involved in cooperative functioning. I then share the ways in which respondents problematized community challenges and prospects. Table 6.2 delineates the community groupings that participated in this process.

Table 6.2: Community Interviews

Method	Wupperthal	Nieuwoudtville
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Langkloof and Eselbank • Wupperthal, Langbome, Beukeskraal, and Nuweplaas • Kleinvlei, Agterstevlei, Grasvlei, and Brugkraal • Suurrug, Menskraal, and Kouberg • Heuningvlei and Witwater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nieuwoudtville • Southern Bokkeveld
		Elim
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elim • Spanjaardskloof

When developing the socioeconomic interviews, I had two major goals. I wanted to capture information in regards to Rooibos production and broader wellbeing, and I hoped to expand upon capabilities workshop training within individual interviews. I asked respondents to engage practical reasoning by delineating personal and community resources, critically reflecting upon life plans, and examining their potential role as community leaders. To stimulate in-situ analysis, I began each interview with a brief PowerPoint training in which I provided definitions of key interview concepts²¹ then outlined primary interview themes.²² By asking respondents to differentiate between facts and opinions, I left them with a final question—what could they

²¹ Conceptual definitions consisted of the following: (1) conditions explain your current situation, or how things are in your life, community, and work right now; (2) problems are conditions that make it hard for you to get what you need or want; and (3) opportunities are conditions that can help you get what you need or want. Whereas conditions are facts, problems and opportunities are opinions about facts.

²² Interview themes included general information, social wellbeing, economic activities, Rooibos market activities, and community problems and opportunities. The first four themes focused upon facts and the final interview section explicitly engaged respondent opinions about the information they had presented.

personally do to help solve Rooibos and/or broader community concerns? By engaging semi-structured interviews, I was able to adjust my style to meet the knowledge and interests of my informants, and in Wupperthal, so many participants prioritized the notion of community unity that they empowered me to view the interview process as a peace and reconciliation mechanism.

My PAR-based approach was interactive rather than static; thus while I played the role of the neutral researcher when recording key interview information, I shifted to more active involvement at the end of the interview process. Before asking my final leadership question, I briefly revisited compelling statements in order to note individual interests and capabilities and encouraged respondents to play a more prominent role in community problem solving. I spent a great deal of time in various outstations and because sampling was purposively random, I ended up interviewing some respondents with whom I lived. Moreover, many of the communities were experiencing cooperative-based turmoil and people were eager to discuss issues with me whether or not they were selected for interview. Given my dual role as researcher and practitioner, it was necessary to balance the need for academic objectivity with my participatory action agenda, and at times I struggled with this dichotomy. I maintained a research diary to help clarify my thoughts on the matter, and a Wupperthal-based entry illuminates my preoccupation with maintaining an ethic of objectivity in a highly charged environment.

I seek to reconnect rather than divide, but to do so, it is necessary to simultaneously deconstruct and reconstruct...this doesn't mean that I am wholly neutral. I am also becoming a figure in the communities and have no problem taking sides. I'm just careful to take a general rather than specific stance. I am with the farmers—all of them—with their many points of view. Confidentiality, transparency, and respect are my watch words. When people ask my perspective, I share, but I am careful to frame it as one flawed perspective among many...as a facilitator, I view myself as a conduit, one node on the network, but it takes relationship building to effectively become that node. My essential point is that good research cannot be divorced from feeling. While objectivity is necessary, capacity building necessarily is a messy human endeavor.

With this in mind, the findings presented in this section no doubt are colored by my interactive strategy, but this does not mean that responses are any less genuine than those influenced by more traditional research approaches.

Socioeconomic Considerations

This section presents an intersecting analysis of community conditions, problems, and opportunities but it is important to first note the broader differences distinguishing the participating communities. Emerging Rooibos farmers in the Elim area are members of the Spanjaardskloof-based Strandveld Tea Farmers' Cooperative. Similarly to the Wupperthal, this area falls under the domain of the Moravian Church, but regional conditions differ in key ways. First, the area is a non-traditional Rooibos zone, and as stated in the previous chapter, farmers are continuing to determine optimum growing and drying capacity. Secondly, while the area is governed by the Church, it has completed the Transformation of Certain Rural Areas (TRANCRA) process which was enacted by the post-Apartheid government in 1998 in order to convert land into private ownership (Republic of South Africa 1998). As a result, most Strandveld farmers own their land and as the broader area is more interracially mixed, some hire external Coloured and Black farmworkers. This group enjoys somewhat greater financial wellbeing, and is more commercial-ready than their Wupperthal and Nieuwoudtville counterparts who are severely restricted in terms of production capacity due to limited land access.

In the Nieuwoudtville region, most Rooibos producers are commercial farmers or are members of the Heiveld Cooperative. However, some former farmworkers have become involved in Rooibos via the Rooikastert Cooperative. While the group has been in existence for over a decade it maintains a small membership base of 12. The cooperative rents communal land

from the municipality in which to grow Rooibos and maintain sheep, but land tenure is not secure, and while the group is led by an active farmer leader, the majority of its members are ageing. Only one woman is involved in the cooperative and there are no youth, though some members express an interest in sharing their farming knowledge with young people.

Nieuwoudtville is a regional town hub with good roads, shops, and amenities but most of the land in the area is owned by White commercial farmers and there are racial tensions regarding land ownership. In this region, I also interviewed an emerging Rooibos farmer located in the Southern Bokkeveld plains, and as an independent respondent, he was an outlier who has achieved a number of commercial successes, including the installation of an on-farm tea court.

Finally, the remote Wupperthal communities express somewhat differing conditions, problems, and opportunities. This is partly due to their geographic spread and related road conditions—some outstations are more accessible, and these generally have received greater project and training access. Although the communities share cultural traditions in common—including Moravian Church membership and a strong sense of community-based democracy—outstations nevertheless possess distinctive personalities that in part may be informed by local leadership. Some are more communally oriented and others express a strong independent streak, and there are minor class differences as well: some communities are relatively better off in terms of meeting basic needs and have an emerging middle class while others suffer from greater levels of poverty. Despite these differences, during time of research, all of the Wupperthal hamlets were experiencing cooperative-based tensions, though some were more divided than others.

Community Conditions

The project team employed a purposive random sampling strategy in order to select socioeconomic informants. In order to capture a broad range of informants so we broke down our sampling frame into concise categories. Yet we did not equally sample everyone. Middle-range adults comprise the majority of emerging farmers and the farmer leaders felt this age group should comprise approximately 50 percent of our sample size; thus we selected for this. In some instances, there were no youth and many communities are aging so there is a slight imbalance between young and elderly respondents. In a few instances, we chose to interview young people who were not directly involved in production because they comprised the only young adults in the area. Finally, I began fieldwork in each community grouping by interviewing the farmer leaders as part of the training process. Table 6.3 lists the characteristics of our sample. Note that some dimensions add up to more than 100 percent as respondents gave multiple answers.

Numerous respondents can trace their ancestry in the region for three or four generations and a number of older respondents said they were born in their own homes at the hands of local midwives, though this practice has all but disappeared. Despite this continuity, the communities are far from static: many people regularly travel to work as farmworkers, advance their studies, or take jobs in the cities, and one respondent said a job at sea had enabled him to visit many countries. Numerous Wupperthalers told me that time away from the communities represents a rite of passage for youth and many respondents stated that they returned after having saved money to build a house or otherwise secure their wellbeing. There are new arrivals as well: some informants said that they relocated to the communities for marriage, and a few converted to the Moravian faith in order to do so. In other communities, it appears that young people are simply leaving and in all areas, youth flight is a major community concern.

Table 6.3: General Characteristics of Socioeconomic Interview Respondents

Analysis	Characteristic	Total Number of Respondents and Percentages*			
		Sex	Female		Male
		27 47%	31 53%		
Age	18-29	30-64		65+	
	12 21%	31 53%		15 26%	
Marital Status	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed	
	26 45%	25 43%	1 2%	6 10%	
Number in Household	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+	
	32 55%	22 38%	3 5%	1 2%	
Household Members	Lives Alone	Spouse		Children	
	8 14%	23 40%		27 47%	
	Parents	Grandparents		Grandchildren	
	15 25%	2 3%		11 19%	
Siblings	Extended Family		Other		
	12 21%		10 17%	--	
Languages	Native Afrikaans	No English	Basic English	Strong English	
	58 100%	13 22%	24 41%	21 36%	
Race	Coloured		White		
	57 98%		1** 2%		

Notes:

* Percentages are based on a total of 56 socioeconomic interviews.

** This farmer leader respondent had married into the Wupperthal community.

There are more men than women in the communities and a significant number of single men, though within older generations, my sample comprised more married men than women.

While divorce is quite rare, people marry late in life and some do not marry at all. Whereas a few

older women expressed a desire to “find a man” others stated that they had never wanted to marry. Women often have children out of wedlock and single women with children remain with their own family home, even in cases where the father is a boyfriend who resides nearby. It is considered inappropriate to cohabit outside of wedlock and the communities expect a man to have sufficient resources to provide for his spouse before embarking upon marriage. Numerous respondents told me that a ‘proper’ man is one who is married, actively works in his garden, and generally shoulders the burden of physical labor in order to support his wife. In return, she is responsible for maintaining household functioning. Younger male respondents generally expressed a strong desire to marry, but the majority of young women were in no hurry to make such a life change. However, married respondents tended to display higher levels of material comfort and expressed a greater sense of wellbeing during the interviews.

Although communities are relatively homogenous in terms of class, there were nevertheless minor differences. Poorer respondents tended to live in larger households that encompassed a range of extended family members and more well-to-do families adhered more to a nuclear family model, often with extended family living nearby. While I found the number of household residents to be somewhat smaller than expected, the figures may be misleading. Numerous informants stated that they have family members who work or study outside of the communities, and some of these return home for the weekends; nevertheless, respondents were very clear in stating the number of ‘permanent residents’ in their homes, and while some defined ‘permanent’ in slightly different terms, I used the numbers that each provided rather than trying to enforce a universal definition. Finally, while I list only one divorce, a few respondents had divorced and remarried, or were widowed and remarried. Again, I counted these as married as this is how the respondents defined themselves.

Most communities are entirely Coloured and the farmer leaders as well as several interview respondents expressed surprise when I directly asked them to state their race. I asked this question because I was aware of the multiple terms in which the Coloured population employs to describe race, and I wanted to explore how emerging Rooibos farmers chose to self-identify. Interestingly, 12 respondents used a different term than Coloured to describe their race: ten said they were Brown, one said she was of mixed race, and one preferred the term Black. While I chose to reserve deeper race relation questions for farmer leader sociopolitical interviews, I also wanted to introduce the concept of race in socioeconomic interviews to ensure broader research continuity, and in some interviews, this question sparked informative commentary regarding Apartheid conditions and/or contemporary race relations. I incorporate these insights into my sociopolitical analysis later in this chapter.

Finally, all of my respondents were native Afrikaans speakers, but many had varying levels of English proficiency which I crudely categorize based on their own self-assessment. I conducted interviews in Afrikaans with interpreter support, but numerous respondents were eager to try out their English with me. A few of these insisted on conducting parts of the interview in English and in some instances fluent speakers conducted the interview entirely in this language. There is a broad perception that community members are monolingual, but while this was certainly true for much of the older generation, younger people tend to speak English quite well and many emerging farmers are eager to learn more. At the same time, most respondents were much more comfortable in their native tongue, and training service providers should take care to provide sessions in Afrikaans for effective learning outcomes to be achieved.

Grandparents often take on the responsibility of raising young grandchildren as many city-based sons and daughters send their offspring back to the communities during their primary-

school years in order to ensure that they are raised in a safe and healthy environment. However, this does not necessarily mean that school children live with their grandparents full time: for outstation families, young children only return home on the weekend as they spend the week boarding at the local primary school. Table 6.4 shows the years of schooling in which socioeconomic respondents had achieved.

Table 6.4: Highest Level of Formal Educational Attainment by Age and Sex

Analysis	Years of School	18-29		30-64		65+		Total
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
	0-3	--	--	--	--	--	3 5%	3 5%
	4-7	--	--	7 12%	4 7%	4 7%	6 10%	21 36%
	8-11	3 5%	3 5%	8 14%	6 10%	1 2%	1 2%	22 38%
	12	2 3%	4 7%	2 3%	3 5%	--	--	11 19%*
	Tertiary	--	--	--	1 2%	--	--	1 2%
	Total	5 9%	7 12%	17 29%	14 24%	5 9%	10 17%	58 100%

Notes:

* Total does not add up because percentages have been rounded.

Higher levels of education among the younger generation may be directly correlated to the introduction of Mandela grants, which have enabled even the poorest of families to send their children through at least primary school. I noted minor age-based tensions regarding educational attainment as a few of the elder male respondents expressed displeasure with the younger, more educated generation. However many older residents expressed pride in the education levels of

their children and grandchildren, and those with resources invested a significant amount of their income into sending children to high school in town, or even to college in the cities. There are minor educational variations in terms of gender, but community members generally encourage children of both sexes to stay in school as long as possible. Perhaps more compellingly my research findings uncovered minor differences between community groupings in terms of formal schooling, and more educated hamlets tended to be more active in projects.

Related to the question of education is the level of emerging-farmer technical knowledge in regards to alternative standards and certifications as detailed in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Rooibos Market Knowledge

Analysis	Knowledge	Organic	Fairtrade	Buyers	Average %
	No	11 19%	33 57%	41 71%	85 49%
	Yes	47 81%	25 43%	17 29%	89 51%
	Total	58 100%	58 100%	58 100%	174 100%

Most respondents had some understanding of organic certification, and expressed a strong sense of environmental stewardship, but fewer recognized fairtrade, and there was a broad lack of knowledge about buyers. This may be expected of non-certified Rooikastert and Strandveld farmers, but the low level of recognition was glaring in Wupperthal, which gained fairtrade certification in 2005. The most informed responses often came from farmer leaders who had recently attended PAToT training on certifications. Lack of knowledge may partially be due to the fact that numerous respondents joined the Small Farmers' Cooperative well after 2005. As the table above shows, there is nascent awareness and many respondents stated an interest in learning more. Technical support should be intensified to ensure more effective market access.

Table 6.6: Principal and Secondary Occupations by Sex

Analysis	Principal		Secondary*		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Rooibos Production	2 3%	4 7%	15 26%	26 45%	47 81%
Vegetables and Livestock	1 2%	7 12%	8 14%	20 34%	36 62%
Housework and Childcare	12 21%	--	5 9%	1 2%	18 31%
Small Enterprise**	5 9%	5 9%	4 7%	3 5%	17 29%
Vocational work***	--	4 7%	--	1 2%	5 9%
Commercial Flowers/Herbs	--	--	1 2%	2 3%	3 5%
Seasonal Farmworker	--	--	--	3 5%	3 5%
Retired	4 7%	6 10%	1 2%	--	11 19%
Other****	3 5%	5 9%	5 9%	3 5%	16 28%

Notes:

* Numbers total more than 58 as numerous respondents listed three or more occupations.

** Includes home bakeries and shops, and transportation and tourism services.

*** Includes builders, brick-makers, roof thatchers, plumbers, welders, and electricians.

**** Includes cooperative, Red Cedar, municipality, and processing firm employees, formal and informal cleaners, casual labor, and unpaid community support.

Table 6.6 presents interview data in which respondents self-identified with particular occupations. Note that the table does not represent a systematically comprehensive listing because it represents self-identified occupations. In three cases female farmer leaders listed their

leadership position as a secondary occupation, and I include these in the 'other' category, though I did not list all farmer leaders as such. I also did not include Rooibos as a secondary occupation of farmer spouses if they did not identify with this role. In terms of retirement, I interviewed a larger number of pensioners than are listed as retired. Many elderly respondents engage in farm production or indirectly manage their fields, and some did not present themselves as retired.

There is a great deal of fluidity in terms of work, but there also is some sexual division of labor, and significantly more women fulfill traditionally male roles than the reverse. In terms of small enterprise activities, many respondents were directly involved with tourism and this was largely due to the fact that some of the Wupperthal-based communities were involved with a tourism development project which was occurring at time of research. Specifically, numerous informants in the Kleinvlei and Heuningvlei groupings were being paid to improve roads and build campgrounds or guesthouses under the direction of local community leaders who had been hired to manage daily operations. More broadly, female respondents tended to operate home bakeries and shops whereas several male respondents ran transport services. Other males possessed trade skills and one young man claimed to be working pro-bono on a vegetable nursery project for the Department of Agriculture.

Although respondents listed their work as occupations, many did not receive a regular income from these jobs, and some small-enterprise entrepreneurs operated at cost. Indeed, better-off community members tended to actively assist their less-advantaged neighbors, either by charging small fees for produce and access to goods such as telephones, or by donating items or services to those in need. For example, an elderly respondent who traded in used clothing gave items to those who could not afford to pay. In another hamlet, a single mother said that local men with trade expertise were helping her build her own house so that she would no longer have to

rent. While such generosity was by no means universal, respondents generally expressed a strong sense of mutual support and the trading-for-favors custom helped bind people together.

Table 6.7: Annual Rooibos Production (tons)

Analysis	Tons Produced*	Number of Respondents	Total Percentage
	Less than 1	7	12%
	1—2	26	45%
	3—4	5	9%
	5—6	2	3%
	7+	5	9%
	N/A**	13	22%
	Total	58	100%

Notes:

* Wet tonnage.²³ Figure includes wild-harvested.

** Some respondents did not engage with Rooibos or lacked access to their own plot and a few were uncertain about volumes as others manage their fields.

Table 6.7 presents data on annual production volumes. My South African colleagues and I defined small farmers as producing less than 10 tons per year. The information provided below demonstrates that most emerging Rooibos farmers may be classified as extremely small, particularly as wet tonnage significantly decreases in volume once dried for sale. Yet farmers vary greatly in terms of their financial dependence upon Rooibos: for some, tea payments represented less than five percent of their total income whereas others said it comprised their sole income. In Wupperthal those more heavily dependent upon Rooibos were heavily impacted by cooperative non-payment, surviving largely off of their vegetable gardens and by trading favors.

²³ When dried, the tea decreases two to three times in volume depending on the region that it is cultivated and dried.

Of the five respondents producing more than seven tons, one included the independent tea farmer in the Southern Bokkeveld, and the other was a female Strandveld farmer who cited an annual yield of 30 wet tons. Yet the majority of emerging farmers produce less than three tons of Rooibos per year. No Wupperthal respondent claimed more than nine tons and while Rooikastert farmers collectively produce approximately 22 tons wet, each member receives an income based on somewhat less than two tons. Low production volumes largely had to do with land availability. A number of Wupperthal-based respondents said they were unable to engage in their own production as they lacked access to their own Rooibos plots, and respondents more broadly stated that anyone wishing to farm must vie for land that is already under production. Whereas market-based initiatives such as fairtrade may help support emerging farmer efforts, without more land, most will not be able to achieve a viable income from farming alone; thus Rooibos efforts must be conducted within the broader framework of small enterprise development, and despite the lack of modern infrastructure, there are numerous family and community resources in which emerging Rooibos farmers may take advantage.

Many homes are built in the traditional manner with whitewashing and thatch roofs, and in both Wupperthal and Elim, the Church regulates appearances. Nearly all respondents either rented or owned their own housing, though in one case, a young married couple lacked their own home and shared one room with their children and others. Interestingly, two respondents had solar power. One developed solar power for heating water as part of a tourism project and the other chose to invest in solar power in lieu of electricity. Note that while electricity is listed as a family indicator, nearly all of the respondents without electricity stated that this was not because of personal finances, but rather because of their remote location, and in these cases, members were struggling to get transformers placed within their communities.

Table 6.8: Family and Community Resources

Analysis	Family Resources	Yes	No	Total
	Furnished Housing	57 98%	1 2%	58 100%
	Electricity	54 93%	4 7%	58 100%
	Indoor water*	38 66%	20 34%	58 100%
	Indoor toilet*	23 40%	35 60%	58 100%
	Car or Truck	14 24%	44 76%	58 100%
	Government Support**	39 67%	19 33%	58 100%
	Private Pension	1 2%	57 98%	58 100%
	Savings	13 22%	45 78%	58 100%
	Community Resources	Access	No Local Access	
	Transportation Service	58 100%	--	58 100%
	Telephone Service	58 100%	--	58 100%
	Cell Phone Service	9 16%	49 84%	58 100%
	Basic Health Care	58 100%	--	58 100%
	Primary Schools***	58 100%	--	58 100%

Notes:

* Those without indoor water had outside pumps and nearly all had outhouses.

** Includes elderly and disability²⁴ pensions and Mandela grants for child education.

*** In the Wupperthal and Elim areas, there were no local secondary schools.

²⁴ The disabled demographic may be significant and warrants further study.

Nearly all respondents possessed some electronic goods which commonly included such items as refrigerators, deep freezers, microwaves, radios, televisions, and CD or DVD players. Telephones and washing machines were less common. In the Wupperthal and Elim areas, numerous respondents only had telephone access through their neighbors. These stated that existing telephone infrastructure was insufficient for the population size, and no new lines were available for purchase. In Wupperthal, this situation was exacerbated by the fact that the entire area lacked cell phone coverage, and this hindered communication as it often was necessary to exchange critical information via indirect third-parties. More broadly, very few respondents had access to computers and internet, and those that did primarily had access through their jobs. Two respondents noted that they had their own computers but that these no longer worked as electrical surges regularly occurred and had damaged their hardware. Commodity network respondents noted that the lack of internet access made it difficult to communicate directly with emerging farmers; thus this is a serious issue, and young people in particular expressed a strong interest in computer training. While we incorporated basic training into our farmer leader ToT module, we were unable to provide broader support which may be pursued in future project cycles, though the question of computer availability likewise must be addressed.

In Wupperthal, the lack of job opportunities and Rooibos non-payment exacerbated poverty levels. Numerous respondents explicitly stated that they would have savings if they had received payment for their Rooibos, and that non-payment had caused them to fall into debt. In addition to being forced to sell their Rooibos at any price to meet subsistence needs, some families must sell their vegetables to meet immediate income demands, living on little more than bread baked in outdoor ovens and sugared tea for periods of time. Given the lack of local job opportunities, many respondents depended upon governmental assistance in order to survive,

although better-off respondents did manage to save funds for emergencies or for important purchases.

In terms of broader community amenities, all respondents had access to community clinics staffed by nurses. In Wupperthal, nurses visit the more remote outstations on a semi-regular basis. Not only do the clinics provide free consultations, they also distribute medicine at no cost, and the elderly receive free ambulance service to hospitals in cases of emergency. Most stated that state hospitals are affordable, but for major health concerns people tended to visit private doctors which are quite expensive. Some respondents suffered from serious long-term illnesses and had to travel to Cape Town for costly tests and treatments, and this was a considerable source of strain on family finances. Finally, many informants noted that they depend upon veld medicines for minor ailments. Among these, buchu, aloe, and dassie piss were commonly used treatments, and a few swore by Rooibos as a flu remedy. Access to free health care and medicines were primary community strengths, particularly in a nation that only is in the preliminary stages of instituting universal coverage.

All respondents had access to local transportation which consisted of a combination of donkey carts and privately owned trucks. While most found local transportation to be affordable—if not wholly reliable—nearly all respondents found broader transportation expenses to be quite expensive. Transporters cited high gasoline prices and maintenance expenses due to bad roads. When travelling to towns where necessary services such as supermarkets, banks, and secondary schools were located, most residents must pool their resources together to hire a truck. The combined cost of transportation expenses and boarding fees make secondary schooling prohibitively expensive for poorer families, although older children often work to help pay for their younger siblings to attend. Communities address high living costs in multiple ways: some

hamlets have developed their own microcredit schemes in which members pay in and later receive funds for emergency expenses. Many communities have home shops, and in some hamlets, these provide interest-free credit to those who cannot afford to pay for goods, though people must repay their credit at the end of the month.

In addition to widespread health care access and other forms of communal support, emerging Rooibos areas shine in terms of safety. Though one respondent stated that the national news caused her to look at the mountains with worry, all respondents emphasized their safe living environment. Apart from minor crimes in Nieuwoudtville and some instances of domestic abuse, the communities were virtually crime free. Few people felt the need to lock their doors during the day and many said that they sleep on their porches during the hot summer months. This level of safety is remarkable in a country noted for having one of the world's highest crime rates, and despite the lack of local jobs, some respondents left the cities in order to return to an environment where they could live without fear. I myself experienced multiple attempted assaults and break-ins in the southern Cape, and Rooibos community visits and fieldwork provided a much needed respite from the constant emotional strain. In the words of one young man:

I moved back here because my uncle was shot in the taxi violence (in Cape Town). There were two attacks and he was killed. I also was almost killed in a bad neighborhood. I wanted to come home where there are no streets and it is safe—to see everyone and talk to everyone, and live closer to the bible.

Other respondents likewise derived a sense of wellbeing from the safe living environment as well as a heightened ability to play and associate with others.

As much as I struggle, I love it here. It is very enjoyable. There is no crime, no violence—just peaceful.

It is very safe here. I am comfortable staying alone during the week. The kids can play everywhere and walk around at night.

There is no crime here. People disagree, fight, make-up. We can't be angry for long because we are too close. We walk into each other so anger only lasts one week.

In addition to safety, some within the communities had experienced a degree of upward mobility, and there was a nascent middle class. Moreover, regardless of their economic status, many respondents rated their living standard positively. Most took pride in their homes and lifestyle, and as I interviewed nearly all respondents in their houses, with few exceptions, I found these to be well furnished, albeit lacking in certain luxuries such as hot tap water. Wood stoves and fireplaces made life more comfortable, and as I conducted fieldwork during the winter, I witnessed the enjoyment that residents took from socializing over tea by the fire. At the same time, some respondents found life to be quite difficult, and I received varied answers when I asked people to discuss their access to basic needs and their broader living conditions. I include the range of responses here:

There have been very difficult times. When I divorced the kids were young. I used to chop wood and sell it for two rand a bag.

I have survived many hard times. I made a bit of pap from flour if there wasn't enough to bake bread. You must survive on what you have.

I can't afford my basic needs very often. I get by by crying and I think of leaving and looking for a job. But I can't leave my family behind with nothing.

I get a grant from the government but it is not enough. It is my only income because there is no other work.

It is a little bit hectic because I have no work for money. There are no work opportunities.

I struggle. I can't survive only on my gardens. There is no tea money so three or four times a year during the wine harvest, I go to work in Paarl.

Life is not so good...I have a piece of garden but can't plant because...animals break the fence and eat.

When I lived in Cape Town I could get things in shops. When I moved here, I struggled to change my ways. I must plan ahead to get by.

It is better here than in Cape Town. You don't need money every day.

When times are hard I go to the family—to the mothers—and get food.

It is good that my family lives together and helps each other but it is bad because it is hard to make enough money.

It has always been a struggle in the past to make ends meet. It is a little better now...I hope with tourism now I can save a bit for the last few years of my life.

Sometimes it doesn't go well, but I manage by gardening for food, getting my pension money, and I can go on credit at the shop and then pay at the end of the month.

If I don't have something, I can always go and ask for something. Life is all right.

I decide what I want to do each day...some days I try to keep my head above water, but I'm all right.

Life is as it is. If it gets better, okay, but I am quite happy with my life.

If you consider where I came from, I am fortunate to have this good life.

I can't remember a time when I was totally broke. It never happens. I can find wood. If I am eager to work in the garden, I will always have food.

I'm very comfortable in this house with my man and children. I'm always busy in and around the house with my daily work.

It is really nice to live here because my child can do what she wants...food isn't so expensive because my dad can plant.

When you work for a company, you work to death, but what do you achieve? Here, it's a healthy life and for self.

In accordance with Nussbaum's list of central capabilities, I also measured quality of life by asking people how much free time they had and about the kinds of recreational activities they enjoyed. On average, respondents spent approximately three to four hours per day in recreational pursuits, although responses varied in relation to location, age, class, and gender, and some noted seasonal variations in terms of their free time as well. In all areas, community meetings and events took up a great deal of time. Broadly speaking, the more remote Wupperthal communities tended to have somewhat more free time and numerous respondents in this area said they spent the bulk of this engaging with their community or communing with nature. According to one young man, "I go to the waterfall in summer to swim. I like nature and hiking alone". A married woman said that after completing housework "I just rest and look at the mountains for my free time. I enjoy the view". In the words of a retired man, "I am permanently reading, writing, and hiking in the mountains" and an elderly man said that he enjoys participating in community life. In his words, "I sit around, look around, chat down there, chat up here".

By turning the day-to-day management of Rooibos and vegetable production over to their children, elderly men are able to engage more fully in community and religious activities and most expressed a strong sense of pleasure with their lives. Elderly female respondents tended to be active in small-enterprise efforts such as running home bakeries; yet they had free time as well. While most spent this with family or watching television, others were more active. One remarkable elderly lady enjoyed spending the day packing a lunch and revisiting scenes from her youth. As she stated:

Sometimes I walk in the mountains and sing my memories into my [tape] recorder. People say 'Tannie, aren't you afraid of the baboons and leopards? What will you do if you fall and break your leg?' But I tell them that I am afraid of nothing.

Some communities and outstations maintained libraries and numerous women said that they shared books with one another. Whereas young women tended to state an interest in reading, young men expressed pleasure in playing sports and rugby was a popular pastime, particularly in Wupperthal. Yet most youth complained of the lack of youth programs, computers, and cell phone access in their areas and, as previously stated, a number of young men were concerned about the amount of drinking that occurred in the communities. In some areas, there were very few young adults, and these expressed discontent with having “no young people to hang out with”. Finally, better-off respondents were more likely to have less free time, although these considered their busy lifestyles as pleasurable. As one bluntly stated, “I don’t believe in free time...I must work and be productive every day so I can go to bed satisfied”. Less-advantaged informants were generally unhappy to report that they had rather too much time on their hands, though they did find ways to productively fill their days through gardening, housework, reading, and walking. One man had even built his own golf course.

Emerging Rooibos farmer conditions are by no means optimal. Life is rustic and many families struggle to put food on the table and pay the bills. Some experience severe poverty and many community members are dependent on cheap calories in the form of bread and sugar, particularly during winter months when fresh vegetables are scarce. For some, the only escape is to seek work as a casual farmworker or to move to the city where affordable housing is located in dangerous neighborhoods; yet so many want to remain at safely at home where the air is clean and there is space to roam. Indeed, numerous respondents expressed their pleasure in a simple life that is lived close to nature, with family and neighbors to turn to when times are hard. As one woman stated, “we are really blessed to have most of everything except for money”.

Community Problems and Opportunities

Many community concerns may be gleaned from the above discussion of conditions as well as from the related fair market and industry issues noted in previous chapters. However, I expressly asked socioeconomic respondents to detail their perception of community-based problems and opportunities. Table 6.9 presents a compilation of common interview responses. Of these, the four most broadly cited problems included (1) non-payment, (2) cooperative conflicts, (3) lack of technical knowledge, and (4) bad communication. The four most commonly noted opportunities consisted of (1) farmer unity, (2) improving communication, (3) pursuing small enterprise development initiatives, and (4) locating more training opportunities.

Table 6.9: Community Problems and Opportunities

Analysis	Problems	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative conflicts • Rooibos non-payment • Lack of technical knowledge • Lack of managerial transparency • Bad communication • Minimal training opportunities • Decertification • No markets/low market prices • Rooibos pests • Unsavory external interference • Lack of land access • Poverty • No funds for small enterprise development • Church bureaucracy • Bad roads • Telecommunications infrastructure • Alcohol abuse • Nothing for youth/youth flight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand together/reconciliation • Local tea quality • Technical training • Managerial transparency • Effective communication • Industry support • Certifications • Fairtrade social premiums • Wild Rooibos • Cooperative leadership • Product diversification • Small enterprise development • Tourism development • Organic vegetable production • Sheep herding • Organic seedling nursery • Local knowledge • Farmer leaders • Individual hard work • Youth programs

In general, emerging farmers cited low or non-existent Rooibos income as a primary source of concern and while the majority of farmer informants recognized the value of cooperative membership, many were frustrated with their lack of basic market knowledge and their dependency on cooperative leadership to manage issues. Cooperative management likewise expressed a sense of frustration with the lack of farmer knowledge, and stated that they wished to improve membership participation in training and market access. To address these issues most respondents prioritized unified action, and in Wupperthal, respondents noted the importance of effective communication in order to achieve reconciliation. However, while respondents were generally aligned on the question of standing together, individual informants had differing ideas regarding how to best achieve unity. Many were angry with cooperative management due to the non-payment issue. Farmers have depended upon Rooibos to meet their bills and achieve broader goals, and were discouraged by cooperative malfunctioning. As one stated, “I am depending on tea money to build a house”. Another told me that “problems are getting deeper and deeper because the hole in the pocket is getting deeper and deeper”.

Some felt there are growing class differences between outstation farmers and more centrally based members of management and a few questioned managerial ethics. As one said, “farmers work to death but we are getting nothing and we are not included in business practices”. Others expressed concern about the lack of effective communication. According to one farmer, “there is a lack of transparency in the papers and cooperative meetings” and another said that farmers should ask management “how transparent is your transparency?” For these respondents, unity generally meant standing against cooperative management in order to enforce change, and one elderly male told me that the farmers “must stand together, even if we have to go to court” which did occur later in the year, when BAWSI-aligned farmers sued the Small Farmers

cooperative. As Wupperthal Original's management group had previously led Small Farmers, they were not immune from farmer accusations, though their current membership base presented them in a positive light. As one Original member stated, "there are no problems in my cooperative, but it is very young—only one year old...[so we] must do much to be better". Management from both cooperatives did not view issues in terms of class difference but rather felt these derived from their own lack of managerial skill. As such, they felt unity required more effective communication and increased access to training.

Despite these tensions, numerous farmer respondents did not wholly blame management for cooperative difficulties and these were interested in pursuing more broad-based reconciliation. In the words of one young woman, "everyone has problems with communication. People don't always trust each other but we trust outsiders too much". Another respondent noted that Wupperthalers needed to develop managerial skills in order to ensure better communication and resolve fights. As he stated, "how do we break the cycle? If there is someone with management skills, they can do the job". Still others recognized the multifaceted challenges facing management, including the difficulty involved in establishing "contact with outside markets".

Some community respondents believed that farmers were also to blame for the problems. According to one, "my own community doesn't want to stand together to help each other" and another stated that "each farmer does his own thing here—there is no collective action". An elderly respondent likewise told me that "when opportunities come from the outside, bad communication prevents us from being able to stand together and to take full advantage" and a woman claimed that increased materialism was the cause for discord. In her words, "the

community can take too much pride in the pocket. We have become too materialistic”. Such informants generally felt that “farmers must also play their part in fixing the cooperative”.

Finally, while some complained of what they perceived as a heavy-handed and slow-moving Church bureaucracy that hindered opportunities for enterprise development, others believed that the Church helped maintain important traditions and that it played a vital role in binding residents together. For this reason, one elderly man stated that he did not wish the Church to become involved in Rooibos affairs because “it might be possible for divides in the Church to happen and the Church is the single thing that keeps the community together”. Some elders likewise worried about advising younger people on the Rooibos issue, as they did not wish to pass the conflict down to the next generation; yet at the same time, they recognized the need to involve youth. According to one elder, “if young people get training they can do a better job and they won’t have the same conflict as older people”. Another echoed this sentiment by saying that “it is very important to train young people to both work in the field and the office so there is not a gap between the two”. Farmer leaders were also viewed as an opportunity. As one woman stated, “farmer leaders can help by going to workshops and then sharing skills from them into the community” and another female respondent felt that farmer leaders could be instrumental in promoting intra-community trust.

Apart from cooperative conflicts, land tenure was also of paramount concern. Indeed, Rooikastert and Wupperthal farmers lack access to the amount of land necessary to become more commercially ready. One informant bluntly stated that “White commercial farmers have everything. The price of land is so high, the government is not willing to invest and people with Rooibos farms don’t want to sell”. While Strandveld is better off in terms of land tenure, farmers face similar obstacles to growth: whereas farmers own land, those who wish to expand must rent

public tracts from the Church and there may not be enough productive terrain to satisfy local interests.

Transportation and infrastructure concerns need to be addressed as well. Whereas there is a tarred road into Elim, other roads in the area have yet to be fully developed. Wupperthal-based farmers in particular face hefty transportation expenses, both in getting their Rooibos from remote plots to the cooperative, and in transporting their crop to distant processing firms. Indeed, numerous Wupperthal respondents felt cooperative membership was their only hope for a viable income because individual farmers were unable to make any profit by selling directly to processors; some further said that they had all but quit producing Rooibos because crippling transportation costs cancelled out any profits. Finally, in Wupperthal, respondents of all ages lamented the lack of telecommunications infrastructure, although elderly informants focused upon insufficient landlines while younger people decried the lack of cell phones, computers, and internet. Some blamed this situation on the Church, which is responsible for managing both road and infrastructure investments and which collects taxes for such purposes.

In terms of broader income generation, respondents prioritized expanding tourism services and related small enterprise efforts. As one elderly woman stated, “Wupperthal has very many opportunities for guest houses, bakery shops, butcheries, and other types of small business development”. Other women noted the potential for developing local coffee shops and investing in community-based clothing and handicraft manufacture. Men are also interested in local enterprise: some males operate a longstanding shoe factory in Wupperthal Central, and numerous men noted that their trade skills were a valuable resource for tourism development. One young man stated, “I can use my welding experience to make things to sell to tourists here. I haven’t got

all the tools, but I can save”. Others noted the importance of accessing English language training “because we need this for tourists”.

Finally, youth flight was a concern, and youth in particular noted problems that young people face when they choose to remain within their communities. According to one, “there are not so many opportunities for young people to become more than they are, like training”. A female respondent expressed pleasure with having received basic first aid training as well as a desire to become a paramedic. However, she stated that “there are no opportunities for training in this...and there is not enough money to pay for training”. Another complained about the lack of youth apprenticeships and numerous young respondents claimed that the lack of local opportunities was exacerbating substance abuse. Yet while people expressed dismay over prevalence of youth flight, many respondents felt that local job development would help retain this population and some felt that smarter Rooibos development could stymie the crisis.

When I asked respondents to provide advice and/or explain what they could personally do to address community concerns, I received a broad range of responses. Though these final interview questions made a few female respondents sufficiently nervous that I ended the session without pressing for answers; the majority was eager to share ideas. Respondents provided me with the following advice, which ranged from the philosophical to practical as well as encompassed both the general and the specific:

If your heart and soul is involved, things can get better.

You must take the opportunity to learn. Don't stand on your own feet or strengths because you think you are better or smarter. Be humble.

You must respect people. Don't make problems with people—do your own thing. But you mustn't sit at home. Go and plant and reap the rewards of planting.

If something bothers you, say it. They can also say how they feel. You can't see inside another person so if you don't speak, they won't know.

As a community we can stand together and make great choices...I don't want them to think like me, but I want us to think along the same lines and decide what to do together.

We need to share knowledge. Information sharing is important.

All the farmers must understand that to move any further we must work together.

There are many opportunities here to create a good livelihood. It's not hard work, but it takes time to build oneself up.

A lot of money is available but no one knows money is available.

There are different industries we can take advantage of...[and] more buyers want wild tea now.

The first thing we must do is to get a nursery and plant our own organic tea [seedlings] here.

The main issue is marketing. Small farmers wait to hear from processors for the price. They have no influence over the price—as a farmer they must just take it, and so they must learn marketing so they can take more control.

Maybe a matric [high school diploma] youth could be groomed into Rooibos knowledge...we really need a student to get a bursary to study. We can identify someone in the community and this could be a huge jump for the community.

When stating what they personally could do to address community and/or Rooibos concerns, respondents made the following statements, which again included both general and specific ideas as well as a degree of uncertainty:

I think I can help but I don't know how.

Personally, I can't do much, but if the majority pushes, I will join in and give my help.

Through conversation and a friendly attitude, I can try to bring people together.

I can give advice and guidance to younger generations.

I need to change the mindsets of people here to believe in a better future.

I can talk to the community and tell them how to attend meetings because it makes your mind clear. You learn many new things but you must listen to other people's advice.

I live between people and listen to all their problems so I can put this on paper and bring it to the farmer leaders so they can work together to make an action plan.

I can help others farm. I enjoy sharing knowledge about pruning Rooibos.

I am trying to set up more computer training with the farmers here at the school.

I [want to start] a youth program...if I fail, I will fail and I can try again. It has to begin somewhere...I will go to the youth and ask them what they want to do and be and encourage the youth of tomorrow to stay.

Conclusion

Emerging Rooibos farmers face profound challenges but there are numerous opportunities which may be more effectively exploited. First, their number is growing, and there is strength in numbers. Communities participating in this project expressly stated their desire to achieve unified action, and by collaborating to develop intra- as well as inter-community action plans, community members may solve common problems and achieve mutual goals. Whereas youth flight has reduced the number of young people in some areas, there are nevertheless opportunities for youth involvement as educated youth may collaborate with wise elders to develop programs and/or expand upon local job creation via small enterprise formation, but both age groups need access to training.

Communities may engage cooperatives as an engine for stimulating broader growth. As one female respondent noted, these may work to send talented youth for formal education in such topics as quality control. The industry has recognized the high quality of tea produced by

emerging farmers, and there is potential for communities to invest in further value addition as Red Cedars successful line of Rooibos beauty products demonstrates. Most producers remain unaware of potential and actual buyers, but market opportunities are expanding, and farmer leaders can network to help stimulate growth. Finally, despite the rapid changes facing emerging Rooibos groups, community relations remain fairly intact, and in both Wupperthal and Elim, the presence of the Church helps to keep traditions alive. Moreover, individual lifestyles are relatively fluid, and people tend to be tolerant of diverse standpoints. Most residents live without fear of crime or bodily assault, and many have the time to pursue personal interests. More broadly speaking, people know how to live more slowly and recognize the pleasure of simplicity, with some preferring the challenge of handmade craftsmanship over the use of machines.

To conclude, the communities are comprised of a heterogeneous collection of homesteaders, and whether by choice or circumstance, emerging Rooibos farmers are characterized by a marked resilience. Farmers also exhibited a strong sense of environmental stewardship, and while respondents may lack a full understanding of organic technologies, they typically were proud not to use chemical fertilizers or pesticides on their crops, and many noted the cleanliness of their local waterways from which they could and did directly drink. Future projects may help the communities capitalize on these strengths in order to achieve more sustainable income, and with further support, farmer leaders may expand their leadership role within their communities as well as in broader Rooibos and tourism networks. With this in mind, the next chapter turns to a discussion of the sociopolitical dimensions in which farmer leaders say are influencing local development prospects.

Table 6.10: Emerging Communities SWOT-V

Analysis	Emerging Communities	Farmer Leaders
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic necessities • Space to roam/free time • Basic health care access • Low crime rates • Government support • Trading for favors • Tolerance for difference • Local knowledge and skills • Environmentally minded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic and cohesive • Multiple capabilities • Leadership capacity • Communication • Solution-driven • Equality-minded • Hard working • Confidence/courage
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical knowledge • Communication • Dependency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leadership • Network access • Technical support • Certification • Diverse standpoints • Democratic processes • Small enterprise expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commodity networking • Public speaking • Community training • PIE and PAP • Fundraising • Youth programming • Small enterprise leadership
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural poverty • Cooperative conflict • No certification • Minimal road and telecommunications infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network marginalization • Lack of resources • Short-lived project • Multiple responsibilities • Lack of fair payment • Cooperative conflict
Vision	Directly involve farmer leaders in Rooibos commodity networks to support emerging farmer networking	

CHAPTER SEVEN: THEORIES OF POWER, POWER OF DIFFERENCE

Introduction

Multilateral engagement requires connecting a range of different actors; yet wholly participatory networking is an impossible ideal because diverse groups operate from unequal positions of power. To better realize the potential of networks, actors at all levels must work to recognize and address power differentials (Evans 2000; Katz 2006; Picciotto 2008). As discussed in Chapter Two, conflicting sociopolitical theories undergird contemporary scholarship, and while efforts have been made to synthesize the pluralist, managerialist, and class-based perspectives, scholars consider these to be epistemologically incompatible. As such, studies and related development approaches tend to be grounded within one paradigm, yet the distances between these theories represent their most important strength; their very differences are what give sociopolitical theories so much analytical power (Alford and Friedland 1985). Pluralism illuminates cooperation, but is blind to structural limitations; managerialism recognizes structure, but fails to fully capture agency; and class-based approaches understand inequalities, but overemphasize intergroup differences while ignoring intragroup diversity. In other words, each perspective offers important insights, but also has dangerous weaknesses.

Singular examinations not only obscure complex social processes, they help drive real-world conflict because, as Alford and Friedland (1985) so eloquently state, theories have the power to shape social actions. Thus, rather than theoretically trying to untangle the epistemological conundrum separating these meta-theories, one of my objectives was to devise methodological integration for direct application. As an action researcher, I wanted to harness

the power of diverse concepts in order to help farmer leaders construct a more equitable negotiation table, and a primary project goal included bringing emerging Rooibos constituents into broader networks. I thereby integrated sociopolitical research with training objectives and commodity networking activities.

The action-oriented approach is philosophical but by no means essentialist. In seeking to methodologically integrate theories of power with a diverse team of farmer leader researchers, I ended up broadening my own worldview. In a research diary entry during my first month in South Africa, I wrote the following observation:

I operate from a post-Marxist standpoint. As I am particularly sensitive to race, gender, and class considerations, it will be necessary to explore other social dimensions which may be impacting engagement. I should also take care to incorporate both a pluralist and managerialist lens so that I may effectively capture democratic and bureaucratic processes.

I stopped defining myself as a Marxist well before leaving South Africa. Identities are important but this research experience has convinced me that they ultimately limit far more than they liberate. I also no longer view social relationships through the narrow lens of conflict: intergroup fighting does occur, but so does cooperation. These concepts offer analytical insight but represent a false dichotomy as do intra- and intergroup distinctions. Differences exist within groups as well as between, and discord certainly is not limited to intergroup relations; thus scholars must be careful to avoid essentialist interpretations. By engaging multiple perspectives with the leaders I realized the holistic potential that differing standpoints offer and witnessed tremendous scope for common ground.

The inclusivity of intersectionality theory (Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005) offers a way out of power's epistemological crisis. Just as social dimensions intersect and influence the life

chances of individuals diverse political processes interact and inform the outcomes of group actions. The complex dynamics of modern life do not allow for simple thought, but by making that which is hidden visible—by giving voice to those who wish to communicate their thoughts on substantive issues—development agents can gain far greater clarity. The question is how best to engage such an examination. As social settings differ across time and space, theoretical integrations first require methodological synthesis, and scholars may advance understanding of culturally specific conditions as well as global patterns via explicitly integrated analyses. Figure 7.1 provides an ideal visualization of sociopolitical synthesis.

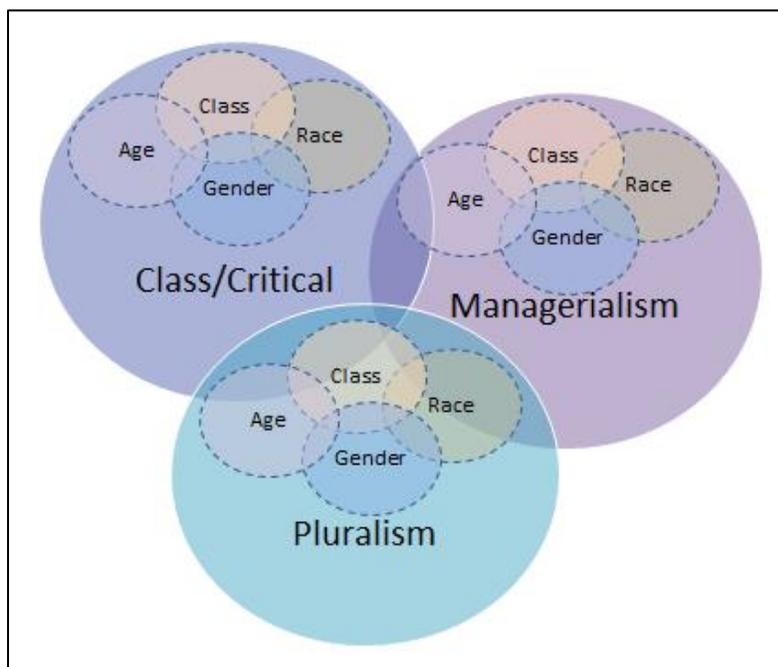


Figure 7.1: Sociopolitical Intersectionality

To conduct sociopolitical examinations, I ‘sampled’ political perspectives by directly questioning farmer leaders about their perceptions of democracy, bureaucracy, and stratification. When designing the interviews, I applied the following conceptual formula: (1) think human

capabilities, (2) learn sociopolitical conditions, and (3) apply PAR to achieve farmer leader participatory information exchange (PIE) and action planning (PAP). I interviewed the leaders during midterm fieldwork, then directly involved them in preliminary data analysis in subsequent training sessions which were conducted in the final project quarter during a period of intensive commodity networking.

From a practitioner standpoint, it was necessary to maintain a simple analytical structure so that I could more wholly involve the leaders, but my academic agenda was somewhat at odds with this imperative. I was conducting dissertation field research and had to maintain my complex theories-of-power framework for sociopolitical analysis. Moreover, my Afrikaans ability was limited, but achieving more complete inclusion meant facilitating training sessions that ultimately comprised tertiary-level education in sociopolitical thought. Fortunately, by the time we began data analysis I had developed strong ties with the leaders, and having conducted field research together, we had achieved good communication via our own blending of Afrikaans and English. The leaders and my research assistant additionally helped me improve upon the fieldwork process by encouraging me to simplify terms in ways that participants could more readily understand. As such, they empowered me to get at the core of sociopolitical concepts so that I could present them as precisely and as objectively as possible, and the leaders and I came to view sociopolitical theories as part of a conceptual toolbox in which differing theories had specific uses for examining particular concerns.

During midterm fieldwork, I began each interview with a training session that consisted of introducing key concepts and terminology in Afrikaans. This session briefly reviewed the conditions-problems-opportunities framework in which we had previously engaged during socioeconomic training, and I introduced the concept of different levels of analysis by

differentiating between internal and external factors. To do so, I provided concrete examples of conditions that are internal to self, internal to the community, and external to the community. I then detailed basic sociopolitical concepts and reviewed these before beginning interviews. Ensuring preliminary understanding enabled me to subsequently conduct a deeper coverage of theories of power during participatory data analysis. Table 7.1 illustrates our reflexive approach to sociopolitical integration.

Table 7.1: Sociopolitical Praxis

Method	Training	Research	Action Data Analysis
Pluralism	Strengths and weaknesses of democratic organization	Democratic conditions, problems, and opportunities	Pluralist solutions to identified democratic, bureaucratic, and critical problems
Managerialism	Strengths and weaknesses of bureaucratic organization	Bureaucratic conditions, problems, and opportunities	Managerialist solutions to identified democratic, bureaucratic, and critical problems
Class/Critical	Equality, equity, and inequality definitions for each social grouping	Critical conditions, problems, and opportunities	Critical solutions to identified democratic, bureaucratic, and critical problems

The farmer leaders offered diverse sociopolitical perspectives which they expressed during interviews as well as during data analysis. As I was concerned that theoretical training might influence leader perceptions, I tested for shifts in view by asking each leader to rank the importance of sociopolitical concepts to emerging Rooibos farmer life chances at the end of their interviews and again at the end of our final data analysis session. During both ranking exercises, every leader marked democratic processes as being important or very important, and they diverged most greatly in their perceptions regarding the importance of race to life chances. Table 7.2 displays final leadership ranking, illustrating these differences as well as convergences.

Table 7.2: Farmer Leader Conceptual Ranking

Analysis	How important are these concepts in terms of determining emerging Rooibos farmer life chances?					
	Democracy	Class	Gender	Bureaucracy	Race	Age
Very Important = 3	30 (10)	27 (9)	12 (4)	12 (4)	15 (5)	3 (1)
Important = 2	4 (2)	6 (3)	16 (8)	16 (8)	6 (3)	16 (8)
Somewhat Important = 1	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	4 (4)	3 (3)
Not Important = 0	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Importance Rating	34 (12*)	33 (12*)	28 (12*)	28 (12*)	25 (12*)	22 (12*)

Note:

* One farmer leader was not present during the final ranking exercise.

Leader standpoints did not significantly change after theoretical training, implying that their opinions were developed prior to project involvement. This continuity also may be partly due to the fact that many recognized the importance of multiple concepts during both of the ranking exercises. Nevertheless there were some shifts: by the end of the project the leaders generally ranked all of the concepts more highly, and some leaders came to rank class more highly than they had previously ranked age. Indeed, the final importance ratings demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing emerging farmers. In analytical discussions, the leaders argued the necessity of democratizing decision making at both the cooperative and the industry levels to improve market-access potential, but they noted that class-based inequalities prevented farmers from achieving production and trade objectives.

Whereas more women than men had prioritized gender during interview sessions, during final ranking men rated gender as highly as did their female counterparts. Also, because most of the communities were comprised of a number of old families, we included the notion of inter-family relationships as a social dimension in fieldwork interviews, but when conducting data analysis, we collectively decided to drop ‘family’ as an explanatory tool. It is not that family relations are unimportant—intra-family are essential to wellbeing—but in terms of sociopolitical analysis, we found that inter-family relations were not so important. One leader expressed collective opinion in this way:

It is not about families. It’s about the community standing together. We are all equal here—there is no difference between families in terms of work. We need each other...but being a member of a family *is* important to life chances. We need family in every way.

Finally, while our meta-perspectives may have remained fairly consistent, we all improved our analytical capacity by becoming more open to different ways of perceiving the data. While the leaders were aligned in terms of common objectives, they ranged a great deal in terms of their social characteristics: some leaders were quite young, and others were older; there were nearly as many female leaders as men; some were more advantaged and others lived with less; and although nearly all of the leaders were Coloured, one was White. As the facilitator of in-field research, I was a White American woman, and therefore a significant group outlier; and during the first two weeks of data collection, I brought with me a young, White Afrikaner male who brought his own perspective to bear. Our sociopolitical analysis reflects the diversity of the research team, and the complexity of our insights demonstrates the contestations, conciliations, and corroborations in which we made. Via contact with one another, our perspectives evolved, and even in the controlled setting of the individual interview, numerous leaders contradicted their

own statements as they delved deeper into the topic at hand. This flexible brainpower helped us achieve more holistic understanding of the sociopolitical world in which emerging Rooibos farmers operate.

In the sections below, I present findings in the words of the leaders as much as possible, and the dialectic holism of these pages may be viewed as a demonstration of the analytical power of difference. The perspectives presented in this chapter may, at times, appear to be contradictory and it has been tempting to weight some of the information as more emblematic of empirical reality in order to clarify broader patterns. However, the farmer leaders recognized that all people experience struggle and opportunity and perhaps this more accurately represents the nature of power. This certainly does not mean that all people struggle equally, nor do different groups of people have access to the same opportunities, but I have decided not to silence any one voice. As an outsider to the communities, I am well aware of my responsibility to the people with whom I have worked and I do not wish to generate or exacerbate local divisions. By leaving certain questions unanswered, I open the door to the farmer leaders, and encourage them to lead a deeper round of analysis, in which community members may collectively derive conclusions from the data presented below.

Age

Recent studies have explored African youth-elder dimensions within the context of global generational shift (Cole and Durham 2006; Reynolds Whyte et al. 2008), and regional education literature clarifies intergenerational relations among rural African populations by highlighting the centrality of elder respect to youth training (Reagan 2000; Rwomire 1998). Numerous leaders likewise stressed the importance of community-based age relations and told me to incorporate a

thorough examination of this dynamic in field research. Our broader focus prioritized adult emerging farmer concerns and we did not directly engage with children, but we did employ the notion of age in two ways. First, I asked the leaders to differentiate between young, middle, and elder adults when developing their community sampling frames so that we could interview differing age cohorts during socioeconomic interviews. Second, these groupings helped me frame ‘age’ questions in sociopolitical interviews. Leader perspectives remained consistent over time: during the first ranking exercise, 64 percent described age as important or very important, and this number remained the same at time of final ranking.

The interviews uncovered a number of corroborations in regards to local conditions. First, most of the leaders felt there was age equity within their communities, and all viewed the roles of differing age groups in similar ways:

Here there is age equity because everyone is respected but older people can’t do the same things as younger people so we work in different ways.

Children are just supposed to play and enjoy their time and not deal with adult stuff...the adults are more responsible for looking after the community—they look after the elders...[who] just go on with their gardening...they are just living their life...keeping the young ones in line.

People respect all ages. With kids, you are small, stay silent, don’t talk, but with all other ages, people really respect each other.

Children are kept in their place and they must respect their elders...but respect is for all the people, also for children.

We all respect each other in different ways...young people do the physical work. Older women and men both give the answers to many things. They have the knowledge, the answers.

The young must get an income and build their future. This is up until 50. Life goes more around the house and extended family after 50, and elders—70 plus—are settled down. They are living for church and caring for their great grandkids.

Elders must give guidance and lead the community. Adults must work and raise kids and teach kids manners.

We sit down in meetings and make ideas about how to go further...the older people share ideas and the middle adults make a plan, and some of the younger adults come and listen.

The old people...make way for middle aged people to come in and take an opportunity because it is their time now and they are at the right age for operating, but they still go to the elderly for advice.

The leaders offered somewhat different insights in regards to the level of respect each age group could expect. While most felt that elders commanded more respect, some also noted the presence of youth-elder tensions:

The older adults, we talk with more respect, I mean that is the way we were raised up.

Older people have more respect coming their way, but there are a lot of young people in Wuppertal who don't know how to speak to older people...they say 'you' instead of 'Tannie' [Auntie].

Young people are respected but not as much as older adults...older people tell younger people what to do.

As you get older, people have more trust in you rather than a younger man. There is more respect for older—except elderly—in terms of jobs.

A good well-mannered child is respected by elders, but as soon as he starts smoking, he'll lose that respect.

All age groups are treated differently. Children still get a hiding though it is illegal. If you are older you must have more respect, even if there is only two years difference.

Older people don't care about electricity, but younger people want it. Young people can't turn on the TV or radio during the day. Elders see this as money wasting and they fight about this—so the youth don't want to be involved. They don't want 1960s values.

I am the youngest farmer in the cooperative. So they must respect that or as a young farmer, I will pull out and that will be a problem in the future because older farmers need us young farmers to move forward.

If old people don't respect younger people then young people inherently won't respect their elders.

Some farmer leader and socioeconomic respondents noted the presence of age-based inequalities within the communities:

Older people are established with land, but the middle and young adult age groups are not established.

When people are young, they don't have the land or the gardens...usually you don't get land until after 30.

When we form an association, older people are left out because people don't want to include them. But they are the people with the knowledge. They are treated badly. There is respect, but some people say 'leave the old man alone—he is talking nonsense.'

People say I'm old and I must stay away from Rooibos. Young people in [my community] don't respect their elders anymore. They are the big bosses.

A few felt that differences in treatment did not represent broader social inequalities, but were rather a consequence of the differing characteristics of individual community members and the inability of some to practice multi-dimensional respect. According to one farmer leader, "if they have respect for you, you'll have respect for them. It isn't about age". Moreover, all farmer leaders felt there was more age equity within the communities than in the cities:

Outside of Wupperthal, it's different. There is more age inequality. Older and middle adults get jobs fast, but it is not so for the young. The young have no respect for their elders and the elders don't respect the young.

When I go [to Cape Town] I don't want to talk to elders. Life is too fast, there is no time and the type of conversation is not interesting. I get involved because I

have to—not because I want to—because life goes around money all the time there. Here, life goes around how can I help my neighbor.

Cape Town is different. There are many more opportunities than in Wupperthal, so young people don't respect elders because they don't need anything from them. They can just get a job and whatever, but here, I need the advice of elders to do my work. Their knowledge is important.

Despite minor age-based tensions, youth and elders do cooperate with one another and all age groups are concerned about the prevalence of youth flight:

The majority of our community is over 70. We are a pensioner village because there is no big income for middle aged adults and youth, and this is what we have to change so a lot of people will come back.

The problem is there are not kids—no youth—in the community. There are only middle and old adults. The middle take executive responsibilities like meeting attendance and decision making. The elders are passing this to the younger—they are trying to get youth back. The few youth here don't want to get involved. They are too young and afraid of older people.

Most who have matric [completed secondary schooling] or try and study after matric are in Cape Town working for themselves. They come only for holidays, but they don't want to come back to live. They have lives and wives elsewhere, so I don't know what will happen to this place in the end because the younger people who stay will take over, but if [tourism development] is not here, they will just be sitting at home doing nothing.

At the same time, younger and older residents have different interests and experience differing problems, though the younger and middle cohorts share similar work concerns:

Young people don't have any work opportunities. There is not enough sports for young people to play or activities. We have too much free time.

Young adults have different problems than other age groups because old people got more work in the past with less education. In today's times, we must have education and training to get a job.

Working conditions [for young adults] is not good. Some went to matric, but no further. They must carry on like middle adults.

[Middle adults] want more money and the problem is that there aren't jobs for more people here, and the problem with Rooibos is that you must wait three years before you can harvest Rooibos, and some people plant fields, but when they harvest, there isn't money.

Young adults they listen, but they are not feeling something...some of them are not interested in tea. They are more interested in vegetable gardening than tea...because they can always get the money when they need it...tea is long—one year or three years before you get money—so that puts more power in the garden.

The older people are invited [to workshops] but they don't want to come because they have less education. Younger people have more education so they feel more comfortable attending workshops.

No young or middle people want to be committee members for the Church. They say the Church is wrong, but no one wants to be responsible as a committee member.

Finally, various age groups face differing concerns, but the leaders noted that adults of all ages must collaborate in order to capture opportunities. They also discussed how members of differing age groups may support one another:

[Young people] try to focus on spiritual, cultural, social groups...so this is an opportunity.

Middle adults are the most important because they are today's leaders and the younger ones are tomorrow's leaders.

As you get older, your conditions must improve...the old people...have good Rooibos tea and the money goes better...they create a nest for their children so the children can inherit and they can start something up.

By my age, I have a bit of knowledge and can share it with people, organizing, and getting to different departments...we have energy, vision to stay focused, but somehow there are still blockages somewhere. We're trying to make something out of nothing.

Older people know their problems and have wisdom so they provide people with more opportunities than other age groups. But younger people have more opportunities because they can work.

Maybe the elders want the younger generation to take lead. They want youth to take leadership, to give power to kids to manage farms.

To summarize, many youth are relocating to cities in search of jobs and/or independence, and whereas some may return home in their middle age, others will not. In Wupperthal, numerous young adults have remained, but many of these have lost interest in Rooibos due to low pricing and cooperative conflicts. While elders generally view their role in terms of guidance, some older people worry about advising youth because they do not want to pass the Rooibos conflict to the next generation. Further, young adults generally have more formal education than their parents and significantly more than their grandparents, but they are less likely to attend meetings or to become involved in Church positions. Some young adults state a lack of interest, whereas others claim that attendance is futile as they feel their contributions will not be taken seriously. Young people also remain dependent upon older family members well into their adulthood, and they have too much free time due to the lack of youth activities. In other words, whereas the elderly enjoy the slow pace and rich pageantry of rural community life, young people are more likely to be bored, though they too appreciate their cultural heritage.

The elderly also note difficulties in terms of actively engaging in Rooibos-based decision-making. Some respondents noted that the elderly are sometimes viewed as 'too old', and some older people are reluctant to attend various training events because they are embarrassed about their lack of formal education or feel that new knowledge would be lost on an 'old mind' such as theirs. Yet young and middle adults readily recognize the knowledge and expertise of their elders and all the respondents I talked to said that they want the guidance of their elders. Young adults also offer tremendous strengths. They are connected to the future and are interested in accessing telecommunications technology. Young community leaders have good

ideas regarding local development needs and the energy—if not the resources— to turn these ideas into reality. Middle-aged adults may assist in such efforts by bringing their managerial knowledge and resources to bear and all age groups may engage more deeply in intergenerational dialogue in order to explore how the various communities may best balance tradition with modernity.

Gender

The literature notes the centrality of women to economic development, and globalization experts have examined the impact of global trade on local gender relations throughout the world, in particular noting the conflicts deriving from change (Benería 2003; Boserup 2007; Lucas 2007; Okojie 1996). Rural development scholars also have sought a greater understanding of the gendered relationship between local production practices and household resource and labor allocation as these are sources of contention. (Barrientos et al. 2003; Carney and Watts 1990; Ramamurthy 2000; Reynolds 2002b). This study adds to the growing body of knowledge regarding gendered production practices within the context of social change. Emerging Rooibos communities are both traditional and progressive and as residents grapple with changing dynamics, they are reframing long-held notions about gender. Perhaps because much of the literature focuses on conflict, I was struck by the high degree of esteem in which women and men held for one another. Women and men alike take pride in their own sex while also expressing the value of the opposite sex, and while community members predominantly define men as providers and women as nurturers, they view their collective role as one that succors home and community. At the same time, the prevalence of gender-based cooperation does not mean that the communities bask in utopian equality: men and women fulfill different social and

familial functions, and as gender roles are in flux, tensions certainly exist. This section offers a multifaceted examination of these dimensions.

While I sought to ensure objectivity by seeking both male and female insights, this project more actively engaged with the gender variable. Humanist ethics and an overall strategy of inclusivity guided all aspects of our involvement and we maintained a gender policy to recognize female leadership as well as to capture the perspectives of women. Indeed, “women’s empowerment cannot be complete in an unjust society, and a just society cannot be achieved without empowering women”. (Snyder 2006: 25). Farmer leaders offered somewhat differing perspectives on this topic, but they were a cohesive group. Male leaders valued and promoted women’s ideas, and female leaders supported male interests. Gender-based solidarity grew over time as well—during first sociopolitical ranking, 64 percent of the leaders ranked gender as an important concern, and the female leaders ranked this dimension more highly than did their male colleagues. At the time of final ranking, all of the leaders in attendance ranked gender highly, with equal numbers of men and women listing it as important or very important.²⁵

Socioeconomic respondents also expressed a sense of community-based gender equity as well as noted the egalitarian nature of household decision making. Table 7.2 shows the active involvement of women in determining household resource allocations. Note that this table does not capture the full context. Numerous respondents stated that each family member managed personal income, but added to the household pool in which the lead female managed, and some widows said they previously made decisions with their husbands. Others stated that family members decided how to allocate all income sources via kitchen-table discussions, though older people had greater levels of authority, often managing the income of younger household adults

²⁵ One farmer leader was absent during this final exercise. Of the 12 that were present, two men and two women ranked gender as very important whereas four men and four women ranked it as important.

as well as their own. Finally, some elderly males said that financial management was part of a woman’s housekeeping role. Among married couples, shared decision making tended to be the ‘modern’ ideal.

Table 7.3: Household Income Decision Making by Respondent Age

Analysis	Who decides	18-29	30-64	65+	Total
	Female	8 14%	14 24%	2 3%	24 41%
	Male	--	3 5%	--	3 5%
	Both	2 3%	13 22%	8 14%	23 40%
	Lives Alone	2 3%	1 2%	5 9%	8 14%
	Total	12 21%	31 53%	15 26%	58 100%

Community gender roles are complex. Not only are the communities equity-minded, women are increasingly engaged in Rooibos production. Socioeconomic and sociopolitical respondents generally felt that there are no differences between men and women in terms of intellectual capacity—though some of these did see difference in terms of physical strength—and many viewed ‘modern’ changes as part of a broader shift from physical to managerial labor. At the same time, traditional values remain prevalent, and farmer leaders readily outlined the differing roles that men and women are expected to play. While many leaders recognized such roles as ideal types, or noted that ‘modern’ patterns were becoming more common, both men and women tended to feel that traditional roles were nevertheless important and desirable for household and community functioning. In other words, these respondents viewed traditional relations as an expression of gender equity. Note their fine-tuned distinctions and emphasis on respect:

Gender is very important to life chances because each sex has a unique contribution towards society.

If you take a man's daughter, from the daughter's family side it is expected for the man to perform, to bring in the cash, but at the same time it is the woman's responsibility to make a good home.

The man does all outside jobs such as gardening, farm work...her place is to clean house, make food, do light farm work, and bookkeeping.

Men's work is physically harder and women have more free time, but the woman must always take care of the kids....[so] there is gender equity.

A woman's job is social health, upliftment of the community on the Christian side...men do most of the driving...they do the hard work like plowing and transport.

Some jobs women do with men but...heavy lifting is a man's job. This is where respect comes: men don't want women to pick up heavy things. They can, but we respect them so we do it for them.

The communities have been undergoing gender-based transformations, and roles are increasingly fluid, although far more so for women than for men:

In the past few years things have changed. Traditionally, women were treated as minors, as less important than men...things are changing over the past 10 plus years. It started at the end of Apartheid in 1994.

Some people are actually more modern so they treat men and women the same, but then you still get some of the...young people...who still see a woman as you're supposed to work at the home at the house—you're supposed to look after the kids—that's why God made you to bear kids not me. I am the one who has to go work...but there are different opinions, everyone is not the same, it's person to person.

Some men say no woman in my business, but this is moving out. Some women are finding their place in the community...starting baking businesses or home shops.

The community is changing. We are moving towards equality, [but] people are still raising boys to work and girls to stay home, cook, clean. But women are getting more management opportunities now.

The woman's role is to be a housewife, but most women go out to work. Some men don't have work, and both genders make too little money to run the house.

In today's times, women can do the work that men can do. They can make the same pay, so our problems and opportunities are the same.

Indeed, a number of farmer leaders felt there was equality within the communities:

Older women and men are equally respected. There is no difference—the respect is about age, not gender.

People here treat men and women with equal respect.

Workwise women and men are treated the same because women do hard work at the bridge along with men, but also women clean up the farm alongside men. They are paid the same salary by [the tourism project] and men and women respect each other.

In most respects, we treat each other fairly. Here women play a very important role as prominent figures and leaders...women make decisions and have a very big influence over what men do.

Others noted gender-based inequalities. Males tended to discuss the difficulties experienced by women, while females focused upon the inequalities facing both men and women, and some female respondents felt that their sex was rather more advantaged:

Women know less about tea. Women have tea land, but men manage it...women must work by the house, with the kids and cleaning, so women don't have time to work the tea land.

Meetings are 80 percent men, 20 percent women...women don't want to go to farming meetings unless outsiders come.

Usually the land is owned by men because it used to be law that there couldn't be two names on the title. Land is passed to sons. If there is a divorce, the woman usually leaves the land.

There are some inequalities. The woman isn't always getting the rights she deserves. We are only 15 years into a democracy...there is a lot of inequality but we are moving toward equity.

Things are changing but the belief is still there about men working so it is easier for men to get management positions.

Men can go out to work. They can make new friends and meet new people, and live their lifestyle by learning...I can play rugby, make friends, travel, and see places, but women stay here doing what they must—looking after kids, cooking for men.

You don't get single fathers around you—only single mothers, and if they don't get welfare or a man to support them, they have to enter into the man's role to bring money into the house.

Kids listen to their father but they don't listen to their mother as much...the mom is always talking to the kids, but when dad speaks, they listen.

If not married the woman must take care of the kids...this is a problem because the father must also be involved.

Men aren't able to participate as equally in raising the kids—the custody goes to a woman.

If the man has got a woman there are more expectations placed on him because he is the breadwinner.

The woman can chill more at home and raise the kids.

Females are not criticized, but men are criticized in public at meetings.

Women have more opportunities than men because women have more [diverse] interests.

Many men pass away because they drink and smoke a lot more than women.

People here treat women softer than men. Everyone takes good care of women but not of men.

The leaders did note occasional episodes of male-on-male violence and male-on-female domestic abuse. There also were instances where women were verbally abusive to their spouses,

though they did not physically attack men, except in rare cases. The leaders stressed that local violence was a social dysfunction due to alcohol and drug abuse:

Men like to drink too much...you will never see a drunk woman, but you will see drunk men in the street.

Violence is...more between guys, though I know in some cases we get domestic violence...it is not too common...maybe you hear it one week straight and then you don't hear it three, four months.

Some men get drunk whenever they are paid. They swear at women. The other night, a woman phoned here to say her man was going to beat her...the problem is because of alcohol mixing with dagga (marijuana) and tuk (crystal methamphetamines).

There are women here who treat husbands badly through bad words. There are one or two. They have bad communication. They don't know how to use their voice. There are a few men like this too—screaming at each other, but there are no physical fights.

In a marriage, a guy was used to molesting his wife, and when his friends are there, he's the angel and so she starts hitting and slapping him and he can't do anything in front of his friends.

The various communities had different ways of dealing with the situation:

There is some [domestic] violence...but people don't mix with it, they just leave it alone.

If you are being hurt by a man, people will stand by you, but if you are an incomer to the community, people don't treat you in the same manner...you must make the decision to leave the community.

Sometimes we call the police. If a man beats a woman the community tries to help, but it only happens every few months.

If the [Church] Overseers hear about it, they are supposed to go talk to them and find out why there is a problem. If it's something big, it's almost like you have to be in court.

You don't hit your woman—not at all in Kleinvelei. She will take you to court so that doesn't happen here. We have women's rights.

In terms of work, some males expressed frustration with what they perceived as a lack of female interest in taking on managerial roles:

If you ask a woman to be part of management...it doesn't always work...being on a board it's okay, but when it comes to making [hard decisions] the women don't actually do it...they are not willing to be part of [leadership]...I have no idea why.

In contrast to male respondents, some female informants were frustrated by what they viewed as ineffectual male information sharing strategies and protracted cooperative infighting. They hoped to expand their role by fostering more effective communication.

People will listen to women more because men can't put the message across softly. Women have a different approach.

Because women are good at communication, there are many chances for women to find agreement with each other, but men don't talk and there are disagreements about things.

The man thinks about his problems but he doesn't talk...women talk more to other people, and other women give you advice about what you must do. We know you must talk more and then you get ideas about how to be.

In other words, women may not wish to fulfill managerial roles in precisely the same manner as men, but some female respondents did state a strong interest in taking on managerial responsibilities and given the longstanding Rooibos conflicts in Wupperthal, their different communication style may signify a much needed strength. However, to realize this opportunity, both men and women need to become more cognizant of each other's communication styles and develop a strategy for understanding one another.

To conclude, Rooibos farmers traditionally have been male, but transformations have encouraged women to enter into production, with some seeking managerial roles. Fairtrade certification also requires cooperatives to recognize gender equity protocols designed to help foster greater female involvement, and people are integrating their traditional notions of gender with modern views. Whereas there are some gender-based inequalities—in both directions—the communities have a strong sense of equity. As one farmer leader expressed, “we have gender inequality because we don’t have the same opportunities, but there is equity because everyone respects everyone”. Moreover, some men and some women want broader equality, though cultural traditions remain important. My Afrikaner research assistant made the following astute observation:

The men have always taken the protection of women seriously, and it is something that is engrained in [Afrikaans-speaking] culture. That women are taking management and leadership positions in a place like rural and religiously traditional Wuppertal is an indication that things are changing.

I believe recent transformations offer both promise and peril. I recognize the gender-based inequalities outlined above and believe that “the ultimate goal is freedom and well-being for everyone” (Snyder 2006: 25), but while I resisted similar gender traditions during my own upbringing, I also realize that individualistic ‘modern living’ generates its own set of gendered dysfunctions, such as high divorce rates. Frankly, I admired local male-female relations, and hope that people hold close those traditions that engender so much harmony, even as they pursue change. In the communities, people are slow to marry and they stay married, and many people expressed a great deal of affection for their life mates. Informally, I asked married elders for the secrets to their relationship longevity and their insights were simple yet sage: both partners have a shared responsibility to communicate, never go to bed angry; love with all one’s heart; forgive

everything; and more generally promote spousal interests, for by supporting the other, one succors one's own wellbeing.

Class

Contemporary critical theories are multifaceted, but ultimately derive from Marxist thought. The class perspective primarily examines how capitalist cultures depend upon cheap labor to fuel economic growth, and scholars likewise focus on the collusion of the state in terms of maintaining the status quo (Alford and Friedland 1985). Critical scholars are particularly interested in social movements as a mechanism for change, and while some express the necessity of full Marxist revolution, others note the dialectical nature of social action and the potential for nonviolent political resistance (Evans 2005). Gramsci's (1971) notion of 'war of position' helps scholars examine how differing social groups politically engage within trade arenas. Wars of position occur when people challenge hegemonic systems of power. Where counterhegemonic efforts prove successful, hegemonic forces seek to coopt and thereby neutralize the threat to power (Cox 1983; Keahey et al. 2011; Shreck 2005). Scholars also employ Polanyi's (1957) concept of embeddedness to examine social processes within economic arrangements. Within this framework, alternative regulations re-embed social and ecological regulations within voluntary trade networks by redefining quality in terms of domestic and civic wellbeing (Raynolds 2000; Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010).

Both of these approaches offer analytical insight into macro-level processes, but studies tend to ignore local class distinctions and often paint communities as homogenous. Examinations tend to prioritize higher levels of analysis because struggle is more easily understood in terms of broader social relations where class inequalities are stark. As Magubane (1979: 222) states in his

Apartheid-era treatise on South African political economy, “those classes that exploit and dominate others have tried to find theoretical and ideological weapons to supplement their physical domination”. Whereas recognition of class domination offers critical insights into the nationwide institution of Apartheid and ongoing patterns of global separateness, this us-versus-them ideology is difficult to justify in local arenas where relations are considerably more entwined.

Certain scholars have sought to address micro-level gaps by advancing awareness of local power differentials (DuPuis and Goodman 2005; Hinrichs 2003), and this research similarly examines local class dimensions in order to clarify the dynamics shaping producer livelihoods. In emerging Rooibos landscapes, populations are relatively homogenous in terms of class, but farmer leaders nevertheless recognized the importance of class to emerging farmer opportunities. Some leaders vocally positioned themselves within the class domain and the broader group became more unified in regards to this dimension over time. Whereas 57 percent stated that class is important or very important at time of first ranking, this number increased to 100 percent of attending leaders during our final exercise, though many maintained a strong pluralist orientation as well.

Similarly to age and gender, most of the leaders felt that community conditions were best explained in terms of class equity, stating that those who were relatively better off were not treated any differently than those who were poor:

Everybody is workers class. Only a few have a bakkie [truck] and they are not much richer.

All people [in my community] are working class—everyone is pretty much the same...[in Wupperthal Central] there are some working class and some middle class, but everyone treats everyone exactly the same.

In Wuppertal Central, there are work differences between the middle class and the poor but the lifestyle is the same—everybody eats the same bread, and everyone is treated in the same way.

Everyone here is working class. There is not much difference—even in Wuppertal town—and if people have more there, they just worked for it.

There are very poor people here in Wuppertal...[but] you're basically treated the same.

Others expressed a spirit of equality, citing the existence of local support mechanisms:

Farm children get a good education. All the kids go to the same school.

There is no class problem. If someone is poorer than me, I will help them out.

We are raised...to accept when we at least have everything that we basically need...when there comes a time that we don't have it, as I told you people actually try to look after one another...and there is always someone who will come and say 'Hey are you okay? What do you need, do you need money or this or that?'

Middle class people can afford more so they have more opportunities...but everyone here shares money.

Here at least the poor can communicate with other groups. In Cape Town, the gap is too far apart...here there is more support. In Cape Town, you're on your own—you must pay for everything.

Indeed, many respondents felt that class relations as well as individual lifestyles were significantly better within the communities than elsewhere in South Africa, where inequalities are more glaring:

In Cape Town there is class inequality. There are people living life to the fullest. They have a good job. But some have no job or a bad job and they can't live at the same standards.

If you go to Cape Town, there it is totally different...with the little that we have, we are actually more happier than they are.

Look, I hate even going to Clanwilliam, so I moved down a class so I could live here and actually think I am rich beyond belief.

Yet tensions did exist, with leaders stating that some within the communities questioned the upward mobility of middle-class residents:

The middle class think they are better than the workers class, but they are not treated better.

Hypothetically, if some people became very rich or poor here, people would be understanding but skeptical of it. The dynamics and relationships would change—people would start wondering where this man got money from.

People treat each other differently based on class. People with bakkies look down on the poor. The poor look down on or don't trust those with more money. People look down on those with more opportunities, like leadership training, or those who are organizational representatives.

Although there are different classes in Clanwilliam, there is equality and respect there. People don't question it like people here would.

With some exceptions, Wupperthal-based leaders were more likely to cite community-level class equity or equality. In contrast to this, leaders residing in regions with greater class distinctions recognized local-level inequalities, particularly noting the differing conditions of farmworkers as well as highlighting class-race intersections:

The middle class can hire workers to do the job for him. I use my own means, but the middle class uses workers.

Farmworkers don't get the same respect as others from the rich. The poor don't really get respect.

Some farmworkers live very, very badly, but it is for him to stand up for his rights because rules are there to protect him. But in many cases, farmworkers don't know their rights. They are living in one small area, working to death and sleeping.

Here we have two communities. There is a White and a Coloured community. The Coloured are 90 percent working class. Nine percent are poor. One percent is more or less middle class. The White community is 98 percent middle class, two percent rich, one half percent pensioners—the workers class...poor Whites live better lives than the middle-class Coloured.

Farmer leaders also discussed the impact of class-based inequalities on community livelihoods in broader terms:

I think social class is important...it is important. As you can see, the middle class have fewer problems and more opportunities than workers class farmers—it is easy to see—so social class is important.

Class is important to life chances—it is harder to get ahead if you're poor. You need stuff like equipment to get ahead in life. If you're rich, you can have a computer, cell phone, etcetera, so there is class inequality.

For me, I am working class, so I can't go to university. I have no money to visit friends. If there was money then I could take a vacation to America.

The workers class is struggling to move forward because we have fewer implements, machinery. The middle class has, maybe not the best like the rich, so they are still struggling to get there. But he has what is needed.

More advanced farmers have farms and are settled by 32. They have staff and can grow their business. But for us, we must stand in the field and we can't tend to business, so we end up in one thing or way of thinking.

The middle class have a finance problem, because if we make our lives better, we can make other lives even better. But if we don't have extra money, we can't pay more to farmworkers.

Despite these constraints, farmer leaders were generally hopeful about the future and cited a number of opportunities for economic advancement, including merging an individual ethic of hard work with a spirit of collective cooperation:

Class says whether you can get an opportunity or not, but if you work hard you can do something. If you believe you can't get ahead, you won't.

If you want to be rich or middle class, you must work until you're rich.

If I start a shop here, I could move up a class...there are opportunities...but I have a bakkie so I could drive and get things for the shop and others don't have that opportunity.

Working class opportunities are to work in a close relationship with rich people. We can get help from different departments. I can become a director in a small business, can get business shares, or link with commodity groups.

It would help if people in [industry] positions...could just share their advice—share the advice that they have.

In summary, emerging Rooibos communities are fairly egalitarian in terms of class, although there are minor differences that fuel local tensions. In the words of one farmer leader, “we have class equality, equity, and inequality. There is all here”. Despite the rise of a nascent middle-class in some of the communities, access to land more generally constrains emerging farmer prospects, and while many Strandveld farmers own land and hire farmworkers, respondents in this area note inequitable class dimensions between these two populations and the need for both farmers and farmworkers to gain more equitable pay. More broadly, community members are increasingly able to send their children through primary or secondary schooling, but only a few have access to tertiary education. Some within the younger population wish to advance their own knowledge via formal courses because they recognize that jobs now require significant levels of training, which less-advantaged community members find hard to access. Conflict between members of Wupperthal cooperative management and outstation farmers may have been exacerbated by internal class dimensions, with the result that some farmers chose to shift their allegiance to BAWSI.

At the same time, there are many opportunities for local economic growth if community members stand together and make a plan. Communities already maintain formal and informal

support networks, and this impulse may be capitalized upon in order to pursue economic sustainability. Industry and other support networks may assist by actively listening to farmer interests and supplying advice, training, and resources. Within the communities, those with more resources may help less advantaged brethren by bringing those with talent, grit, and skills into initiatives; and residents who have less can be more supportive of the advancement of their neighbors in the knowledge that such support can help one improve his or her own life chances.

Race

There are numerous ways to approach the race question and both pluralist and conflict-oriented discourses are shaping dialogue in South Africa as well as more broadly. The notion of cultural pluralism first arose in the eighteenth century, and recent diversity and multicultural studies engage this framework, particularly in the fields of education and business where the focus is upon direct application (Banks 2007; Herring 2009; Lawrence 1997; Parekh 2000). Pluralist approaches promote reconciliation through awareness, noting that heterogeneous societies cannot capture the benefits of diversity “without developing a common sense of belonging among its citizens” (Parekh 2000: 341). In South Africa, activists have used these precepts to inform post-Apartheid nation building processes, including truth and reconciliation activities (Mandela 1993; Tutu 1999). Other thinkers proffer a more critical perspective (Biko 1978), and recent examinations highlight the nation’s ongoing failure to achieve meaningful economic or land reform despite its pluralist rhetoric (Cousins and Scoones 2010; du Toit et al. 2008).

Race continues to shape the life chances of emerging farmers who are struggling to gain footing in an industry where they traditionally have operated as farmworkers or menial laborers.

Eighty seven percent of the Rooibos industry has Coloured staff, but Whites still dominate management positions, and nearly all commercial farmers are White (Sandra Kruger and Associates 2010). Yet the farmer leaders were least unified when discussing the impact of race on life chances. At initial ranking, 50 percent said the race variable was important or very important and while this number did increase over time, there was still a broad spread during final ranking, with 42 percent ranking race as very important, 25 percent selecting important, and 33 percent stating that it was only somewhat important. When I questioned elders about life under Apartheid, I also received mixed responses: some spoke of harsh poverty and ill treatment and others said their rural location and community closeness enabled them to enjoy a measure of independence.

Despite this diversity of opinion, people were keenly aware of racism. One informant told me that “people have tremendous reservoirs of pain” about racial matters. In addition, the Coloured population must straddle the ambiguous zone between black and white (Adhikari 2006). The following analysis provides insight into the complex racial issues with which emerging Rooibos farmers necessarily grapple. To begin, some leaders chose to emphasize the pluralist ideals of post-Apartheid South Africa:

We live in a democratic society so life chances are more about what you do than your skin color.

Race doesn't matter. All farmers have the same problems. There is a White guy here. He is also farming with the association and selling tea.

People accepted [a White resident] as one of us when he married a Coloured woman.

People don't have a problem with racism here. In projects, I work with people of different races and no one has a problem with no one. We all work as one.

Race is very important to life chances. If we stand together we can make this country something.

Respondents provided an intersectional analysis of critical race-class intersections, noting historical dimensions as well as contemporary inequalities:

Skin color is not important...[but] Coloureds are poor. Whites got rich from Apartheid.

White farmers won't let Coloured farmworkers stay on their land but they are friends with other Coloured farmers so there is a race and class connection.

White people had opportunities to learn more than people in the Coloured community. Today, many Coloureds still don't have money to send their kids to universities.

I went to a meeting at [one of the processing firms], but I felt very badly treated...but I think the problems are not so much about race, they are more about the size of land.

There is still very much race inequality in the community, still very much. Look at the different farms and the level of infrastructure.

There are gross differences between Whites and non-Whites. Whites are privileged still. They have economic freedom. The Coloured community is struggling to make ends meet. Race is linked to class.

White people have work and good work but brown people have less work, less money...brown people must do more physical work.

[Coloureds have] no land access, no access to finances, loans, no security. This is linked to class.

Coloured people struggle from the bottom to get something. White people have a platform to stand on...this is due to Apartheid.

We may have grounds but no implements because we come from poor families and must do all by hand. Our parents didn't believe in going to banks for loans. They didn't want to take risks. Markets were closed to Black farmers so we had no opportunities. In the 1960s, we had everything—tractors, trucks, supermarkets. But with politics it got difficult. We had to sell our farms, move to cities...this place used to be full of fruit trees and vegetables. It was green.

Leaders also spoke of nervousness or annoyances when coming into contact with members of other races:

In South Africa, race is important, but for me it doesn't matter. I don't care about race, but people I work with force me to be Coloured, or African, etcetera.

People can talk more freely with Coloureds, but this is because of language...I feel shy if the language is English.

People here have big respect for Whites. They respect each other also, but when Whites come here, there is huge respect...when people speak to Whites or Blacks, they are nervous, they think they must not make a mistake. But we just talk naturally with other Coloureds from outside.

People here feel more comfortable talking to [Brown people]. It is better for Brown people to come because then you can say what you think. But with White people, you have to be careful what you say.

White people come as tourists and we must make food for them. We must make the best food for them—better than what we eat. This is good, because we get extra money—good money. Some Whites are respectful but some come to the lodge, and we clean the lodge, but they complain. They ask where is this or that and act like it is not good enough.

We treat Whites who come in with respect, especially if they're part of the community association. But we feel threatened about fundraising opportunities...they come to the meetings but they don't socialize, and then they go home. I've noticed that they don't eat our cake, which makes me feel bad. We just close our eyes, but I've noticed because in Cape Town everyone eats my food.

Others mentioned the presence of stark inequalities, interracial distrust, and ongoing segregation:

Racism and Apartheid are still there. People live in separate neighborhoods.

In Clanwilliam there are still some farmers who don't want to mix with Coloured or Black people. Race has changed, but not completely...conditions are different from place to place...[so] South Africa has racial equality, equity, and inequality...a little bit of everything.

I don't know if you've heard the word hottentot. Some White people in the area, they won't call a Black person a kaffir—even though they act racist towards him

they won't call him a kaffir because they are too scared of the law—but they still call a Coloured a hottentot.

In work I meet many Whites and some are really trying to change and respect you as a person, but they are definitely in the minority. Many Whites are stuck in 1970. If I have a lot of expertise than Whites gain more respect for me because they also have the perception that we are dumb.

There is some racism in this country still. If I go out of Wupperthal, some farmers are amazed that I'm still alive—that the Coloured people didn't kill me yet. Only some of my family and friends visit me here. Some family won't come because I'm married to a Coloured woman. When I was younger, the rangers I worked with called me a Coloured lover...you have Whites against Whites because some Whites hate Whites who mix.

And a few focused more specifically upon Coloured concerns:

White people are ahead of Coloureds. So are Blacks in front. But is there anything I can do? It's because of the Apartheid years and now we're a Black country. Coloureds are left out...in Apartheid, Whites had more opportunities. Now Blacks are kind of taking over.

Us Coloureds have it tough because we are not White enough or Black enough. If you get a job and maybe the boss is White or the owner of the business is White then you have to be White, but if it's about BEE than you have to be Black.

Numerous leaders acknowledged the presence of conflicted or racist sentiments in their own communities, particularly in regards to the Black population with whom they acknowledged little exposure:

When harvest time comes, on other farms when I go, I may have contact with other races...but I only really have contact when I go to other farms.

For a White person to come and live here, some people would have a problem because they would think he wants to be boss.

Some older people are angry because they don't want [White farmers} involved because they got all in the old days.

There are a few Black people coming in now as farmworkers...some farmworkers are treated badly and some well. It depends on who they work for.

People here respect Whites. I think they don't like Black people very much. I really don't know why the Coloured people don't like Blacks. Very few Blacks come in here.

There is inequality between Coloureds and Blacks, but no Black people live here. If they did, maybe it would change.

Because we don't know the background of Black people we fear them a lot more. As we see on TV, Black people are killing White farmers...and this makes us nervous.

Many of our Coloureds were raised to be racist towards the Blacks and we have more respect for the White people...our ancestors were raised by the White people to be racist towards the Blacks.

[Coloured] people are raised to think more highly of Whites, less of themselves, and even less of Blacks. This is what Apartheid did—people still live with the perception that they are dumb or bad.

When concluding the race portion of the interview, I encouraged leaders to share some positive aspects about race. Some leaders recognized the benefits of being Coloured, others identified opportunities offered by members of other races, and a few discussed potential for ongoing reconciliation:

Coloured people...are recognized by the government as Black so there are a lot of housing, farming opportunities. There are clinics and everything.

White people come often...there are tourists...we pay a lot of respect to them because they bring more money to the community.

Coloured communities emphasize respect and looking out for one another. Family is very important. I treasure this.

Black people stand together a lot more than Coloureds or Whites do.

Coloured people can create opportunities to be more honest with each other—especially in business—this is a big opportunity.

If Black people were to come to the community...the Church doesn't discriminate.

Apartheid played with [White] minds too. It is my responsibility to make a better future for my children and for my White brother's kids.

When writing about the future during the dark and turbulent period of Apartheid, Magubane makes the following provocative observation:

So far as the future of South Africa is dependent upon the race question, the difficulties between Englishman and Dutchman shrink into insignificance in comparison with those between White and Black (Magubane 1979: 231).

Although he and other writers note the important role that ethnic differences have played in terms of shaping South African race relations, much of the literature narrowly frames the discussion in terms of Black and White, thereby obscuring Coloured identity. This vibrant and culturally distinct population tends to be subsumed under the broader title of Black, and while this may be a valid strategy for solidarity, it buries differences for Coloureds are no more Black than they are White.

One does not have to be blind to difference in order to achieve unity. Emile Durkheim—a forefather of pluralism—argues that differentiation is what makes organic solidarity possible (Durkheim 1984). By recognizing the full wealth of diversity, multicultural societies may achieve a deeper sense of interracial harmony, and to better understand the entangled nexus of sameness and difference, race scholars may look toward South Africa's Coloured population for meaning. This vital group derives its ancestry from a heterogeneous mix of Indigenous, Black, White, and Asian groups. Coloured people literally embody the ideal of the new South Africa for their mixed ancestry demonstrates that when the rainbow nation blends, the color is Brown. Distinct racial identities and cultural traditions certainly will continue to flourish within South

Africa as well as more globally, but as this nation moves toward deeper reconciliation, the Coloured population represents a potential bridge between opposite ends. By gaining their rightful political voice, they may offer insight into the norms and values that enable Brown communities to absorb members of different races as their own.

To conclude, pluralist- and conflict-based scholarship was once separate, but as scholars from differing camps have addressed the weaknesses of their counterparts, they have advanced knowledge and this has enabled diverse scholars to integrate under the banner of critical pluralism. Yet given their epistemological differences, the concept of interracial integration remains contested, with pluralists stressing multicultural harmony and conflict scholars pointing to deeply entrenched systems of racialized power. This does not mean that critical thinkers want separation; rather they more readily question the underlying inequitable parameters of integration. As Steve Biko (1978: 24) states:

If by integration you understand a breakthrough into white society by blacks, an assimilation and acceptance of blacks into an already established set of norms and code of behavior set up by and maintained by whites, then YES I am against it. I am against the superior-inferior white-black stratification that makes the white a perpetual teacher and the black a perpetual pupil (and a poor one at that)...If on the other hand by integration you mean there shall be free participation by all members of a society, catering for the full expression of the self in a freely changing society as determined by the will of the people, then I am with you.

The question facing actors today is how to foster integration without forcing one culturally defined set of norms upon all, and some network respondents recognize that Whites also must adapt by changing their own “attitudes and behavior”. Rooibos actors across the value chain may improve network functioning by learning from one another’s cultural strengths. Race matters, but differences aren’t simply problematic, these also provide solutions. To achieve opportunities, one cannot ignore the topic of racism, and though it may be difficult, open

dialogue is a critical tool for awareness building. Some of the leaders were initially uncomfortable with discussing racial dimensions, and their hesitancy made me feel ashamed for pursuing the topic; yet our sociopolitical discussions ultimately brought us closer together. To a large degree, I found that while the leaders are well aware of racial inequalities, they nevertheless choose to believe in a pluralist future in which people may succeed or fail based on their own merits rather than the color of their skin. The path may be long, but is paved with hope, for as one emerging farmer so eloquently stated, “Apartheid was the darkness, but now we are living in the light of the new South Africa. There is now light, and it’s getting brighter and brighter every day”.

Bureaucracy

Operating from within the broader conflict perspective, managerialists prioritize organizational examinations and largely focus upon the question of structural control (Alford and Friedland 1985). Managerialist studies tend to conduct macro-level examinations of state, corporate, and social movement control by unveiling the managerial parameters by which these operate, with particular focus upon elite decision-making. Within this framework, elite actors drive managerial actions, and in the context of global markets, centralize bureaucratic power in order to maximize efficiency and maintain vested interests. As centralized governance expands, the less-advantaged lose the capacity to drive their own economic growth and managerial actors increasingly become beholden to efficiency demands (Sassen 2000; Weiss 1998).

During in-field interviews, the leaders initially found it difficult to analytically engage with the rather abstract notion of bureaucracy. They recognized social dimensions such as age, gender, and race and were well-versed in democratic precepts, but few were directly involved in

managerial roles; thus it was necessary to determine a training process that would enable me to capture insightful analysis. The three farmer leaders who engaged in piloting the sociopolitical interviews found the bureaucratic dimension to be overwhelming, and as most respondents had little knowledge of broader Rooibos networks, we sought to concretize the interview approach by focusing questions primarily upon on local institutions such as the Church.

To ensure a balanced approach, I provided a list of general bureaucratic problems and opportunities during pre-interview training. Nevertheless, I was startled by the number of leaders who saw bureaucracies as important opportunities for growth rather than as sources of constraint, and therefore revisited my own orientation to managerialism when preparing my subsequent ‘theories of power’ training. Admittedly I am more receptive to pluralist and class-based approaches, and tend to view managerialist approaches as overly rigid due to their emphasis on elite domination, manipulation, and political aggressiveness (Alford and Friedland 1985).

Revisiting Max Weber (1991: 128), I gained insight about the potential of managerialist agency:

Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards. It takes both passion and perspective. Certainly all historical experience confirms the truth—that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible. But to do that a man must be a leader, and not only a leader but a hero as well, in a very sober sense of the word. And even those who are neither leaders nor heroes must arm themselves with that steadfastness of heart which can brave even the crumbling of all hopes. This is necessary right now, or else men will not be able to attain even that which is possible today.

The notion of outstanding leadership helped me reframe my own understanding so that I could build upon the bureaucratic potential in which the leaders perceived. As such, I treated leadership as a primary driver of structural reform in managerialist training. Perhaps because all of us gained a greater understanding of this dimension over time, leader opinions in regards to bureaucratic importance changed. While 57 percent of the leaders ranked bureaucracy as

important or very important during preliminary ranking, this number increased to 100 percent at time of final ranking, and managerialist insights additionally helped the leaders expand their understanding of organizational constraints and opportunities, thereby maximizing their leadership skills.

The farmer leaders noted the following broad issues when discussing local-level bureaucracies:

Bureaucracies here are democratic but not transparent...[they] are powerful, but not efficient.

[Local bureaucracies] make decisions behind closed doors and they don't involve the community at all...with the cooperatives, management makes decisions themselves then tell farmers what they decide. They don't involve the farmers in the decision-making process.

The corruption comes from years and years ago. I ask older people here 'why didn't you ask years ago about the same problem we're having now?' and the older people say they asked the same of their elders years ago. Nothing changes.

There is an opportunity to become more involved, but people have very little faith in management, so they don't think they'll make a difference even if they stand together.

Most of the communities are located within Moravian Church stations, and many leaders—as well as broader socioeconomic participants—spoke candidly about Church functioning. It is important to give these responses a voice, but the leaders also asked me to be sensitive when engaging this topic in my written analysis. In Wupperthal, some leaders expressed concern about the potential for deeper conflict should the communities become divided over Church issues, and none of us wanted research findings to engender further tension. At that time, certain outside interests had expressed the possibility of taking political action against the Church as a means of 'helping' the Wupperthal communities, though many of the

people I spoke to felt that such a move would prove disastrous for resident wellbeing. While respondents generally wanted the Church to help facilitate growth by investing in telecommunications and road infrastructure, they also appreciated the important role in which the Church played in terms of maintaining community order and local traditions. More general concerns include the following:

The Church isn't too efficient—it takes longer because everything must go through different channels.

The Church is powerful and weak...sometimes it gives us work opportunities, but it is weak because it is not transparent...not efficient.

The Church is not democratic. I never had a chance to vote for anything...the Church is definitely not transparent—they are like tea management.

Usually what the main Church decides, there is no voting. You have one representative for the area, and this representative votes in the Church Council meeting.

In the Moravian Church there is a chance to be elected to be part of the Church Council and if you are elected, you can have a say, or at least a chance to speak out.

The [Church] office...[will] listen but they are afraid of changing anything, so don't try to negotiate about tradition. It is a major, major problem.

In the Elim area, respondents expressed higher levels of satisfaction with Moravian bureaucracy.

Whereas Wupperthal informants criticized Church management for its failure to transparently report tax expenditures, Elim-based respondents stated that the Church regularly printed and provided such information:

The Church financial situation is printed on pamphlets which are passed out to everyone and discussed. Everything is reported in detail...there are no problems, one must just get up and get involved.

The Church is democratic in terms of community decisions...The Church is not always transparent, because only every third year is there interaction between the different community representatives, but it is our responsibility to get the right information.

While most respondents focused upon Church bureaucracy due to their familiarity with this, some leaders had experience within the broader Rooibos network. A few of these felt that outside organizations were more constraining than local ones, but others noted the opportunities that external groups provided:

There is not too much bureaucracy in Wupperthal, but affecting Wupperthal from outside, it's bad.

[An industry firm] makes the decisions. I don't know how we can change it to give farmers more ability to participate...[but] farmers can explore new markets. There are certain opportunities farmers can use to convince it to open eyes, that it needs farmer involvement.

People came together [as a delegation of small farmers] and asked the Department of Agriculture to help them, and they responded.

Finally, as previously stated, the leaders recognized numerous bureaucratic opportunities:

Bureaucracies...can bring a lot of opportunities into a community because they are huge.

Bureaucracy is very important because without it, you can't move forward.

Bureaucracies are important to life opportunities, because they can give work here or not allow work.

Bureaucracies can give knowledge and work. If done in the right way, we can have a positive effect on our life chances.

All bureaucracies have problems and there is inequitable functioning throughout the Rooibos network. At public meetings, diverse actor groups have differing agendas, and

discussions tend to favor the interests of more powerful groups, even during more informal sessions where facilitators seek participant input. One emerging farmer attending an AGM informed me that he did not speak during an outbreak session because others did not focus at all on what he considers important. Subtle power dynamics deriving from decades of unconscious social conditioning may generate such issues, but outstanding leaders can bring quiet participants into discussions by asking for their input. Strong leaders also drive structural processes rather than letting structural parameters drive them. Within some industry firms, management has prioritized BEE staff training and emerging farmer partnerships, and local fairtrade actors have restructured protocols in order to enhance bureaucratic transparency and responsiveness. In other words, inequitable or inefficient structures don't have to define behaviors or actions, and leaders at all levels can collaborate to improve network functioning.

Finally, while I was unable to interview Moravian Church management, I sought out literature about the Church in order to improve my own understanding of Moravian culture. I found that Church teachings encompass a value system that offers a blueprint for generating outstanding leadership. Indeed, Moravians stress an integrated ethic of hard work, mutually supportive communities, and unconditional love (Scriba and Lislud 1997). As such, the Church offers much potential in terms of promoting strong leadership within its communities, and the Church traditionally has engaged in development activities—including helping to launch emerging farmer involvement in Rooibos. Church management may support community members as they seek to expand small enterprise opportunities, and help facilitate community discussions in order to determine how best to balance cultural traditions with the need for growth.

To sum up, bureaucratic findings highlight the central importance of strong leadership and effective communication to organizational capacity. In a democratically oriented society such as South Africa, people expect responsive and transparent organizations to maintain order and provide them with opportunities for growth. Such entities should prioritize the development of transparent mechanisms that promote information exchange and improve responsiveness, thereby reducing the potential for conflict. Although democratic processes are important, managerial actors ultimately must take the responsibility for making decisions, particularly in larger organizations or private firms where full consensus is not always possible or desirable. At the same time, whether public or private, responsive bureaucracies foster greater levels of participation, enabling their members to recognize the benefits in which management provides. Whereas members must respect managerial roles, management must likewise respect the will of its people, and work with them to secure the myriad opportunities that alignment offers. If groups are to reform structures in order to harness organizational power as a pathway to liberation, strong, tolerant, and flexible leadership is of the utmost importance.

Democracy

The pluralist approach offers insights into democratic action by examining the means by which social groups achieve cooperation and social stability. Similarly to other theories of power, pluralism tends to engage in macro-level institutions, but scholars operating from this domain view power in more diffuse terms (Alford and Friedland 1985). As this domain prioritizes human agency over structural impediments, pluralist scholars are particularly interested in studying civic engagement, including the means by which interest groups gain a voice within sociopolitical arenas. Pluralist practitioners seek to resolve dilemmas by building

incremental steps toward social change as they recognize the potential for drastic actions to sow dissent, thereby enflaming conflicts. Finally, global pluralists are interested in questions regarding multicultural engagement and the rise of global governance via market-based social movements and voluntary codes of conduct (Aaronson 2001; Yeates 2002). Just as numerous conflict-oriented thinkers have absorbed pluralist insights into their own work, contemporary pluralists are more cognizant of inequitable structures, though these continue to emphasize the capacity of marginalized groups to take democratic action to end their oppression (Taylor 1997).

My time in South Africa's emerging Rooibos lands gave me a deeper appreciation of the opportunities available to a vibrant civil society. Whereas the above analyses cover a number of inequalities and other structural impediments, democratic principles have the power to bring diverse groups of people together. This was the variable in which the leaders were most consistently aligned, with 86 percent ranking it as important during fieldwork, and 100 percent arguing its importance at time of final ranking. Socioeconomic respondents likewise noted the centrality of democratic decision making to community functioning; and though they are significantly larger, umbrella industry and fairtrade networks operate according to democratic protocols as well. While efforts at all levels are by no means perfect, a collective spirit of democracy enables diverse actors to work together on difficult issues. As one leader stated, "democracy is very important because we can work together in groups—we can work together equally".

The farmer leaders offer a number of insights about the problems and prospects of civil engagement in various environments. When discussing community-level functioning, respondents from differing areas noted somewhat divergent conditions:

We are a small community, so we can talk things out and hear everyone's point of view before deciding.

The general community association has no dues. Everyone is invited and people are informed by telephone—if a meeting is scheduled in advance than by letters that talk about anything happening in the area.

In [my community] people make democratic decisions...everyone can attend meetings and vote except for children.

All except kids are included in [community] decisions, and some old people who are too old.

We lift our right hand by voting.

The community is democratic. Look, if we need a representative, we vote for the person.

The community makes decisions democratically. We call a meeting and vote. You must be 18 or older, you must be a resident, a tax payer, or own your own land even if you're not a resident, then you can vote on municipal issues.

If there is a decision to be made, people here [in the outstation] will come together and make a decision [by majority vote] and then take it down to Wupperthal.

If there is a community project, all of the people who are involved in that project will stand together at a meeting and the majority will win.

Although the leaders and broader socioeconomic respondents took pride in the democratic nature of community-based decision making, they nevertheless shared a number of issues:

The community has a democracy with small problems.

If you're not in the meeting, you're left out. Some people complain, but they weren't there.

We make an announcement for the vote, but only a few people may come, so one gets elected, but it is still democratic because others choose not to come.

I can vote but don't...I'm young so they won't take me as seriously.

Only five to ten percent show up to vote. It's a huge problem. They aren't interested because they think the leaders can take charge and they don't want to get involved.

It is easy to participate, but problems are easy to create. Communication is sometimes a problem, and there is a problem with transparency.

If you talk badly about the community organization, you are warned. If you do it again, you are out. So the purpose of the association is to uplift and if you cause problems, you will be dealt with. It doesn't happen too often—we talk to the person and they listen.

Being an outsider, I would say you are not allowed to say too much things about Wupperthal...[people ask] what do you know about Wupperthal?

When we decide (about community issues) we vote. If there are 10 in a meeting, if more than five vote, some people don't get what they want. I don't like that kind of decision making at all. They may be right, but who knows? People may not know something but they just put up their hand. People can make bad decisions, like voting for a friend though he isn't qualified and can't do the work.

The leaders made the following observations in regards to democratic functioning within Rooibos associations and cooperatives. Those affiliated with Wupperthal's large cooperative were significantly more likely to note the existence of problems than those who were involved in small associations where daily communication was possible:

All members are equally included in decisions. It is easy to get all together. We are in contact every day. Small decisions may be made by management, but all main decisions are together.

The cooperative is democratic with big problems.

I think the [cooperative] democracy has been abused by farmers...but if you go back maybe three years, I think the democracy was abused by the management...it was only democratic to start with and then democracy just fell out of the picture.

In regards to higher-level engagement, the farmer leaders noted the following concerns, which largely centered on the question of network representation:

Most things are government linked, but the government is a bureaucracy, so you can write letter after letter, but they may never address the issue.

No representation at higher levels. If we do have it, we need funds to travel there.

In the industry, we have no say, no representation, no knowledge how to communicate. We can't communicate on a higher level because we don't know what to ask. Now we are learning so we can ask for more business knowledge.

[We want] to learn and understand the process—to learn the value chain. We want to do it right on our doorstep for more money.

Finally, when discussing democratic strategies for broader social change, the leaders not only noted potential for unified public action, they also noted the important role that local leaders play in terms of information exchange:

We can become more involved through protest actions such as rallies, street marches, etcetera.

Political leaders play a big role in small communities.

I go to every property to check water for my work. I go once a week, so I make it my business to have coffee and talk with everyone, to share information.

In conclusion, South Africa has developed into a strong democracy and many recognize the need for democratic mechanisms to become more transparent, accountable, and representative. Research findings demonstrate diverse conditions in regards to democratic functioning. First, while the communities participating in this research are all democratic in orientation, differing local conditions inform the particular democratic process. Due to its larger size and municipality- rather than Church-based orientation, community decision making in Nieuwoudtville operates according to somewhat different rules than those in Wupperthal communities, and even within this region, the various communities have particular

idiosyncrasies. Second, groups at multiple levels tend to base decision making in terms of majority vote, but the question of consensus is an important one, and some farmer leaders feel that community protocols should be predicated upon full consensus rather than majority vote. Indeed, “any system that gives such priority to consensus is quite clearly democratic in a far deeper sense than any system in which decision-making proceeds on the principle that the majority carries the day” (Teffo 2004: 446). At the same time, full consensus is certainly more difficult to achieve in large arenas with hundreds of members than in small venues where every opinion may be sought and aired. There are multiple paths toward democracy, and given the differing conditions of diverse environments, no one way is right for everyone.

Network challenges include fostering more effective communication and determining the most appropriate protocols for bringing large and diverse groups together to engage in collaborative decision making. Whereas some Marxists stress the need for widespread revolution and rapid change, pluralists recognize the tendency for such revolutions to end in totalitarian arrangements. Lasting democratic participation takes time to build, and consensus requires time to achieve. Indeed, this project grew out of a number of initial steps that took place throughout the 2000s that were likewise founded upon years of broader post-Apartheid policy negotiations, and decades of democratic struggle. As the umbrella support network for Rooibos, SARC readily recognized the need for emerging farmer and farmworker representation, and at time of its formation, the group instituted board positions to meet this need. Yet a variety of complications caused early efforts to stall, and emerging farmers were frustrated by the ongoing lack of effective representation. Building from years of direct and indirect dialogue between numerous South African actors, my partners and I were able to design and implement this project, and it took well over a year of direct application by multiple actors to secure formal emerging farmer

representation at SARC. Other project aims—such as the formal establishment of a women’s working group within SARC—have not yet been wholly achieved. In other words, democratically oriented social change requires the hard work of many leaders, as well as a great deal of grit and perseverance.

Finally, within the broader commodity network, both mainstream and radical actors tend to be wary of aligning radical with mainstream interests, albeit for different reasons. Whereas mainstream groups may be reluctant to admit radical elements into decision making due to the potential for conflict, critical theorists are concerned about the potential for cooptation as they note that radical groups tend to lose sight of ultimate goals when entering mainstream venues. Pluralism helps us understand the radical-mainstream dichotomy in another way, for it recognizes the importance of balance. By welcoming radical actors from either end of the sociopolitical spectrum into mainstream arenas, networks may harness the power of diverse insights in order to gain a more holistic awareness of network problems and opportunities. Indeed, negotiation represents democracy’s most serious weakness but also remains its core strength, for as one farmer leader so astutely notes “the democratic way keeps things in check and creates a condition that you can build upon”.

Thinking Hat Synthesis

The farmer leaders and I sought to enhance our understanding of multifaceted sociopolitical dimensions by methodologically applying diverse theories of power to our research questions and findings. Recognizing the importance of multiple theories of power is easy, but mentally engaging a perspective that is not one’s own is significantly more challenging. Moreover, it can be difficult for people to express controversial or unpopular ideas in group

settings where comments may be viewed as representative of personal opinion. While preliminary data analysis occurred in tandem with powers of theory training, I engaged a ‘thinking cap’ exercise to frame our final data analysis session. As such, I brought in an assortment of hats to the session and assigned specific analytical roles to different colors. Physically donning the hats enabled us to gain a measure of distance from our comments, and analysis became less about expressing identity and more about creatively exploring multiple ways of looking at the information.

Figure 7.2 outlines the ‘thinking cap’ approach, which I adapted from information sent to me by my Afrikaans language instructor. Indeed, the approach has been well delineated (de Bono 1999) and is broadly used in education and business circles.

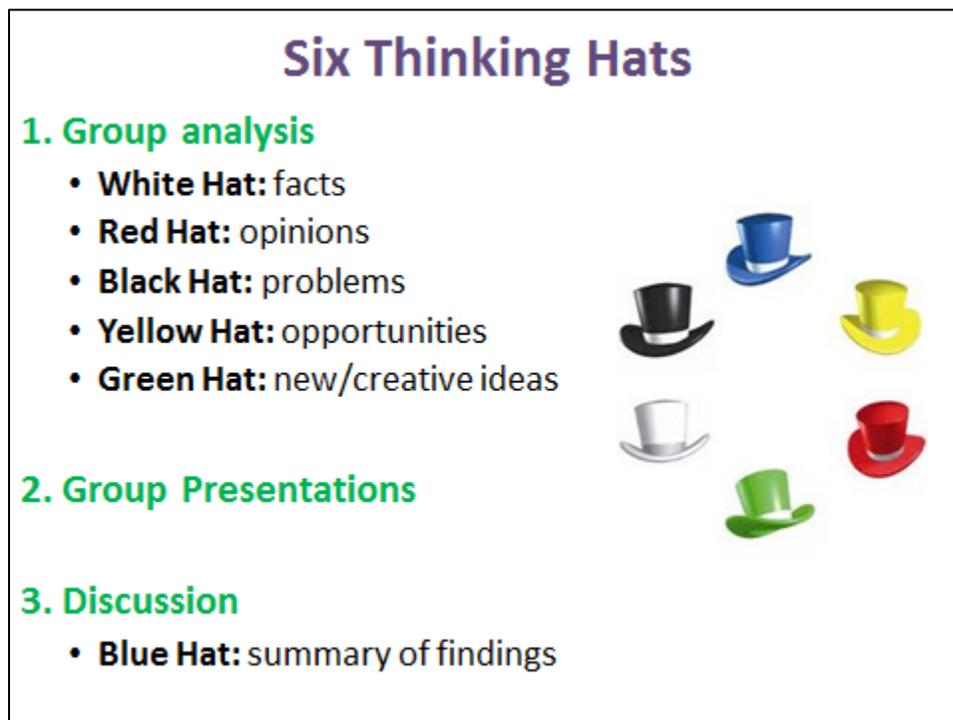


Figure 7.2: Thinking Hat Framework

Via the ‘powers of theory’ and ‘thinking cap’ analysis sessions, we sought to dialectically engage with findings by looking at identified problems as opportunities. As such, we came to understand that theories of power can either constrain or liberate. When actors assume one sociopolitical theory as an identity, they unwittingly sacrifice their own agency to the imperfect structure of a particular approach. By recognizing theories of power as simple methodological tools that when combined help people better understand social functioning, scholars and practitioners regain control of the concepts. A house cannot be built with one tool alone, and the distances between sociopolitical perspectives are what proffer the insight necessary for constructing holistic knowledge.

To conclude, I had two reasons for conducting socio-political interviews. As an academic, I sought to unravel the socio-political dimensions impacting emerging Rooibos communities by directly asking farmer leaders about socio-political concerns. More broadly, I methodologically integrated theories of power in order to begin a long-term process of theoretical integration which will require building a broad body of research that enables historical comparative analysis. As a practitioner, I viewed farmer leader interviews as one aspect of socio-political training. By asking the leaders to share their understanding of the power dynamics shaping their lives, I was later able to facilitate leadership training in theories of power. In other words, my socio-political approach was highly experimental, and it generated complex contextual data.

Whereas the findings presented in this chapter help to illuminate the profound transformations impacting emerging Rooibos communities, the analysis is incomplete. First, the socio-political dimensions are presented separately, meaning that socio-political intersectionality has yet to be fully clarified. This is because I was unable to fully involve the farmer leaders in

data analysis. Time limitations prevented us from completing more than a superficial examination of the data over the course of two sessions, and while I was able to deepen analysis upon leaving the field, farmer leader participation will be necessary for generating a more sophisticated intersectional analysis. Second, the socio-political analysis is primarily situated at the level of the communities because this was the domain in which farmer leaders had the most knowledge. Now that this process has been completed, farmer leaders may conduct a higher level examination by conducting socio-political interviews with representatives from the broader commodity network. Thus, a future project cycle may both deepen and broaden socio-political analysis to generate a more complete understanding of commodity network functioning. Indeed, progressive commodity network actors have expressed a desire for emerging farmers to gain the skills necessary to navigate complex network structures and such an action research initiative may enable progressive operatives to work with farmer leaders to address network participation challenges and more effectively realize market opportunities.

As a consequence of post-Apartheid policies and broader trends in globalization, traditional social roles and relations are being challenged in a variety of ways. While emerging Rooibos farmers continue to face old problems such as race- and class-based inequalities, new concerns, including cooperative conflicts and youth flight, likewise threaten community wellbeing. Yet while the communities are by no means static, important cultural traditions continue to inform a distinct way of life, and there continues to be a great deal of harmony, particularly in regards to age and gender relations. Indeed, after investigating multiple community dynamics by reexamining hundreds of pages of interview notes and revisiting dozens of interview recordings, I realize that the overarching message in which respondents imparted to me is their recognition of the importance of mutual support. Community members forge alliances

with their neighbors in order to take advantage of one another's opportunities; and while these alliances are by no means perfect, relations are relatively egalitarian and sociopolitical engagement is democratic in orientation. The small size and remote location of many hamlets helps to maintain a spirit of camaraderie within close-knit communities where complex familial and occupational ties bind people together.

At the same time, local communities are becoming more connected to nation and world. As the communities participating in this project struggle to maintain cultural traditions and a rural way of life in the face of sweeping sociopolitical and socioeconomic changes, they possess multiple resources ranging from residence in locations that are renowned for biodiversity and rugged beauty to local community knowledge and skills. Yet while emerging farmers are largely "blessed to have most of everything except for money", the lack of income, land, and viable local occupations severely constrains their development potential. Alternative certification systems such as fairtrade may help ameliorate this need, but increased technical support is essential if emerging farmers are to gain more sustainable access to market-based initiatives, and without ongoing training, such initiatives run the risk of destabilizing broader community wellbeing. In other words, more equitable participation is of paramount concern.

South Africa's broader Rooibos commodity network represents a larger community of people bound together by occupational interests, and this network community is experiencing similar growth challenges and opportunities. Yet inequalities are more starkly apparent at this broader level of analysis. Unlike close-knit emerging Rooibos communities, network actors derive from a wide variety of backgrounds and are geographically separated by vast distances. Some agents are cognizant of these inequalities and various entities are striving to support emerging farmer and farmworker growth. However, assistance can be a source of harm as well

as of benefit. When outsiders enter emerging Rooibos communities respectfully, transparently, and with an open ear, their assistance is appreciated; but community members are increasingly wary of superficial approaches. Lasting relationships can only be forged by in-depth human interaction, and as the Rooibos commodity network continues to expand its operations to more fully encompass its emerging constituency, it must acknowledge the important knowledge and critical opportunities that emerging groups bring to the table.

Multilateral commodity networkers may employ PIE and PAP mechanisms to align the interests of diverse groups at the negotiation table, and thereby more efficiently capture rapidly evolving trade opportunities. Twenty-first century markets are driven by the demand for product differentiation, and by fostering greater levels of network diversity across all social groupings, actors may more effectively take advantage of differing network strengths. Yet, commodity networking strategies cannot wholly rely on pluralist precepts, for just as the managerialist and class-based domains are weak in terms of understanding agency, pluralists can be blind to the structural dynamics that constrain action. Network agents must therefore recognize and address inequalities in order to secure genuine and productive participation, and this may be accomplished by investing in shared leadership as collaboratively minded leaders play a critical role in helping to resolve conflicts (Paulson et al. 2009). Indeed, when tensions are well managed, diverse groups are more innovative problem solvers (DiTomaso et al. 2007), and firms with high levels of staff diversity tend to be more competitive and to generate higher profit margins than those that are more homogenous (Herring 2009).

CHAPTER EIGHT: HARMONIZING DICHOTOMIES FOR CHANGE

Introduction

Via support from the 2010 USAID HortCRSP program, I spent a year in South Africa collaborating with scholars, practitioners, farmers, and industry actors on a Rooibos action research program that accomplished a variety of scholarly and pragmatic goals. Project stakeholders included emerging farmers, their communities, and various commodity network groups, and the fieldwork team consisted of local training services provider Sandra Kruger and Associates (SKA) and a group of farmer leaders who were elected by their communities at project outset. This innovative partnership enabled me to design and implement a participatory commodity network research (PCNR) approach, the framework of which comprises a primary scholarly contribution.

South Africa's government denotes farmers of color as 'emerging' in recognition of their ongoing exclusion from land and markets. Within the Rooibos sector, Coloured farmers historically have been excluded from market-based production and trade, but post-Apartheid reforms have promoted industry diversification, and as the global demand for Rooibos has grown, emerging groups have organized to access lucrative certifications such as fairtrade and organics. Indeed, emerging Rooibos producers comprised the first South Africans to enter FLO markets under smallholder standards. At the same time, national fairtrade growth has occurred almost entirely within the White-dominated hired-labor sector, and because FLO has instituted hired labor as well as smallholder Rooibos standards, less-advantaged emerging farmers must compete with established commercial entities that are producing more than fairtrade markets can

absorb. Whereas many commodity network groups support emerging farmer involvement and some are involved in their efforts, intergroup information exchange remains problematic and a variety of other, more structural factors continue to hinder network performance. This project sought to address this issue by reflexively developing commodity networking methodology with the active engagement of emerging Rooibos producers and other industry actors. Rooibos operatives may apply action research findings and lessons learned to further advance network PIE and PAP protocols. The methodology may likewise be introduced into other commodity sectors where networkers are seeking to streamline actions and more effectively harness global trade opportunities.

Summary: Commodity Networking Methodology

Due to the complex interrelatedness of our world's economic systems, investigators must conduct more holistic examinations of the relational networks in which trade groups operate; yet the question of power should be of central concern. Despite their centrality to economic functioning, rural producers remain marginalized within the regulatory systems that govern their livelihoods (Mutersbaugh 2002; Mutersbaugh 2005; Reynolds 2009; Renard 2005; Shreck 2005). It also is difficult for producers to actively participate in research programs because these actors often work in rural areas with inadequate access to the communications devices that make rapid information exchange and regular connection possible (Barrientos and Barrientos 2002).

Not only do structural inequalities impact research and network engagement, traditional modes of research involvement also exacerbate inequitable power relations (Rossman and Rallis 1998). Top-down approaches argue in favor of researcher control by citing the importance of neutrality, but one can conduct objective research without playing the role of a detached observer

who merely extracts information (Berg 2004; Marshall and Rossman 2011). Indeed, no human observer is without bias: when investigators exclude marginalized groups from research participation, they do not necessarily gain scholarly objectivity. Treating research participants as mere objects of investigation may be an excellent strategy for achieving disempowerment, alienation, and research fatigue (Kothari 2001). In contrast, multi-researcher involvement may help ensure more objective analysis (Marshall and Rossman 2011; Mohan 2001; Selener 1997), while also enabling investigators to expand their commitment to research ethics.

This project sought to address the above concerns by building from the recent efforts of scholars operating in a variety of fields. Anthropologists have connected ethnography to globalization studies in order to connect the global to the local (Appadurai 1991; Sawyer 2004; Tsing 2005). Political economy researchers likewise have sought to achieve investigative depth and breadth by conducting local examinations from within the framework of global commodity chains (Barrientos and Smith 2007; Dolan 2004; Dolan 2007; Reynolds et al. 2004). Studies in this domain have linked value chain analysis to action research protocols in an attempt to inform change as well as understand it (Barrientos 2005; Bolwig et al. 2008; Nadvi and Barrientos 2004). In developing the PCNR approach, I was able to capture the contributions of a diverse project team. Together, we were able to more effectively understand and inform the multifaceted dimensions impacting the emerging Rooibos commodity network.

The Framework

To streamline multilateral action, I integrated the following conceptual tools: (1) commodity network analysis, (2) sociopolitical theories of power, (3) the human capabilities approach to quality of life, (4) PAR, and (5) PAToT. This PCNR model comprises a conceptual

toolbox for participatory commodity networking. These components are diverse but complementary, and each informed action throughout project duration. As discussed in Chapters Two and Seven, I incorporated seemingly contradictory theories of power by directly questioning farmer leaders on multiple sociopolitical dimensions in order to sample for theoretical difference (Stinchcombe 2005). This methodological attempt at synthesis helped me to socio-culturally ground understanding: by treating diverse theories as modular tools in which to inform data collection and analysis, I was able to work with my project team to build understanding from the ground up. As I began with a set of theories in which to inform engagement, my approach was not exactly one of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), but it was empirical. It was also reflexive, enabling me to maximize theoretical utility.

Stinchcombe (2005) argues that the method one chooses determines the information one generates. Ethnographic methods have the power to contextualize actions, and by integrating PAR with ethnographic field research, researchers may more effectively understand how social change occurs while also informing strategies for achieving progressive change (Wright 2010). At its best, sociology is not simply a science devoted to understanding what exists; rather sociological inquiry is also about imagining possible futures, and I have designed the PCNR approach with this in mind. World systems theorists such as Hopkins and Wallerstein (1986) recognize the interconnectedness of global capitalism via the proliferation of transnational commodity chains. Drawing from the world systems approach, PCNR re-envision the commodity network as an interconnected community with the capacity to drive as well as adapt to social change. The project team implemented PCNR by combining training, research, and networking activities to promote participatory information exchange and ultimately more

participatory forms of action planning. I reprint the conceptual framework of this approach in Figure 8.1.

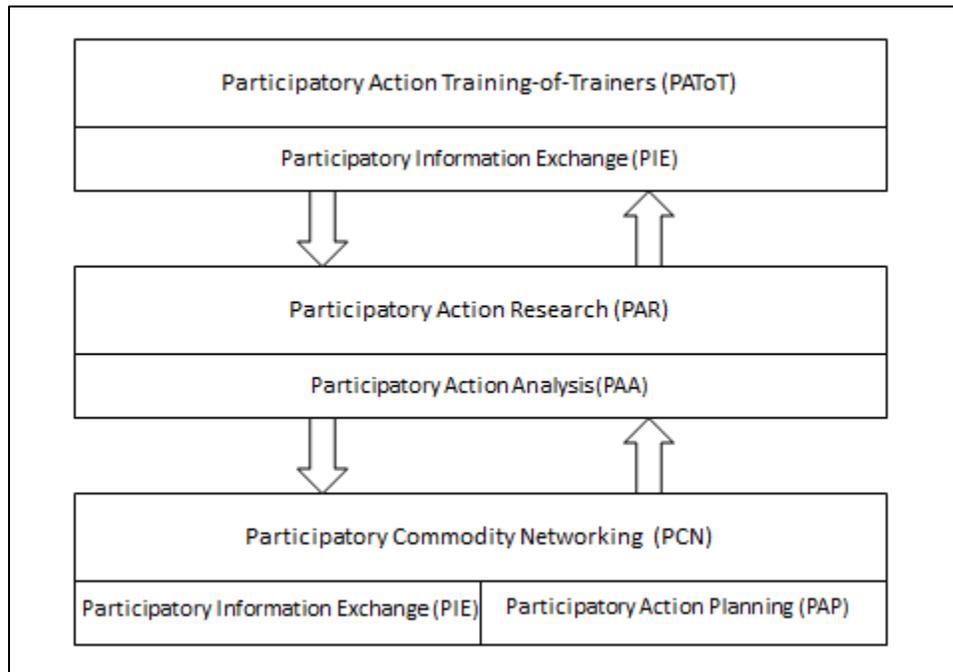


Figure 8.1: PCNR Framework

Application

To develop this project, my project partners and I first generated a collective vision by aligning our diverse goals and objectives. Whereas my scholarly agenda was to conceptually integrate the PCNR approach by collecting a set of comprehensive research findings, my project practitioners primarily sought to advance emerging Rooibos farmer market-access and industry representation prospects via training and interactive networking. Project activities included: (1) capabilities workshops, (2) PAToT sessions, (3) PAR fieldwork, (4) networking activities, (5) community workshops, and (6) end-of-project evaluation surveys.

In terms of pre-project preparation, I refrained from conducting extensive background research in order to prevent myself from forming biases about the field of inquiry, though I did seek preliminary understanding via unstructured interviews with network operatives during my first months in the field. In contrast, my project colleagues had long been involved with emerging Rooibos communities and had recently concluded a major socioeconomic survey of the South African Rooibos network. As such, we engaged findings from this body of work to shape our training and research efforts. We also sought direct input from the communities when developing initial steps. Not only did we make a number of preliminary visits to participating communities in order to conduct unstructured interviews, we facilitated capabilities workshops to learn emerging farmer project demands and hold farmer leadership elections. Throughout the project, I remained actively involved with the leaders and spent a significant amount of time within their communities. By scheduling farmer interviews at project midterm, I pragmatically integrated action research with project monitoring, and this deeper involvement helped the project team become more aware of participation deficits. As project facilitators, SKA and I incrementally transferred control of research and training activities to the leaders who were well prepared for the shift in authority due to careful project planning.

Some aspects of this project were ideal, but other elements were challenging. The project team was inspired and engaged, but given the complex and rapidly evolving requirements of our individual tasks, at times it was difficult to find the time to maintain effective information exchange. Our cyclical operational framework differed from those of typical development efforts, yet we had to operate according to the rapid-fire demands of a one-year project. By maintaining a sense of flexibility, we streamlined the approach along the way, and lessons learned may enhance future efficiency. Research findings enabled me to generate a set of

baseline indicators, and new Rooibos investigations may use these points to longitudinally track changes at multiple levels of analysis. In other words, the PCNR approach provides a blueprint for scalability, though ongoing project cycles comprised of diverse teams will be necessary to achieve market sustainability. While collaborative endeavors have already occurred and certainly will continue to take place within Rooibos, actors may apply PCNR to build from previous efforts and streamline network PIE and PAP.

Finally, division of labor is an important consideration when designing commodity-network action-research campaigns. At project outset, SKA and I established a division of labor, in which SKA managed the design and implementation of PAToT and networking activities while I directed PAR and overall conceptual modeling and integration. During our time together, we blurred this distinction in order to better integrate our efforts, but we have reverted to this initial division of labor since my departure from the field. As such, SKA has continued to work with the leaders to secure SARC representation while I have managed post-project analysis and information dissemination. In an ideal scenario ‘post-project’ research activities would comprise another cycle in which I could directly involve the leaders in final analysis and information dissemination. Indeed, some expressed interest in this, but our geographic distances and their lack of email access prohibits such direct involvement. The telecommunications conundrum must be resolved for rural producers to more effectively take their rightful place in national and global forums.

Summary: Small Enterprise Stakeholders in Multilateral Networks

Commodity network analysis requires both breadth and depth, but it is impossible to achieve a comprehensive analysis of every node in a given global value chain. Similarly to other

researchers, I resolved this tension by prioritizing one network segment for in-depth analysis. Building upon previous studies, I relied upon current fairtrade data and other secondary sources to detail fair market growth and Rooibos consumption trends. My South African fieldwork enabled me to conduct a deeper examination of the national commodity network via a series of organizational and industry interviews with groups most closely involved with emerging farmers. Yet my primary research focus was to more deeply investigate community-level socioeconomic and sociopolitical factors in order to learn from emerging farmer participants.

At the global level, Rooibos markets are expanding, with South African exporters primarily sending tea to North America, Europe, Russia, and Asia, and there are growing prospects for South-South trade. Driven by conscious consumer demand, fairtrade Rooibos consumption is increasing as well (Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). More broadly, the fair trade movement has navigated two decades of growth and while information remains largely anecdotal, fair markets appear to be weathering the current economic downturn. Whereas the global movement is rocked by longstanding tensions, it must be remembered that fair traders must meet highly contradictory quality conventions in order to align market demands with core ethical values (Gibbon and Ponte 2005; Keahey et al. 2011; Murray and Raynolds 2007; Raynolds 2002a; Smith and Barrientos 2005). Working against markets within markets is a provocative trade tactic that has engendered dynamic and sustained growth, but rapid expansion has generated managerial imbalances and exacerbated tensions at all levels. To better serve their membership base, fair traders must align movement services and improve bureaucratic functioning.

The question of producer designations remains a core movement issue, but while solutions are necessary, there are no easy answers. Research findings highlight numerous

inefficiencies in this domain. First, the entry of hired-labor into FLO-based Rooibos production has generated an atmosphere of unproductive competition—at best flooding fair markets with too much certified product—at worst exacerbating local racial inequalities. Second, emerging producers feel constrained by hired-labor/smallholder distinctions as some wish to use fairtrade as a pathway to commercialization, and this managerialist distinction inadvertently may be reinforcing interracial distrust as some feel that the system merely serves to lock farmers of color into marginalized production. Producers represent the heart of the movement; thus it is important to listen to and respond to their concerns, and while solutions may be difficult, increased levels of movement collaboration may serve to ameliorate many of fair trade's growing pains. This project addressed FLO representation concerns by actively involving producers in market-access training, commodity network research, and fairtrade networking activities. The PCNR framework that we developed may be adapted by a broad variety of fair market representatives who wish to improve producer support mechanisms and/or scale up integrated value chain approaches to global governance.

Emerging Rooibos producers have actively sought out and participated in alternative trade networks, but they have met with varying degrees of success (Nel et al. 2007). There has been extensive engagement, from the formation of farmer cooperatives to the development of the multi-party Fair Packers initiative that was intended to bring emerging Rooibos producers into packaging and export (Raynolds and Ngcwangu 2010). While the Heiveld Cooperative appeared to be doing well at time of research, the Fair Packers agreement had collapsed, and the Wupperthal communities were dealing with a series of cooperative-based crises. My research has found that the majority of emerging Rooibos tea farmers has yet to achieve lasting participation or realize substantive benefits. The difficulties facing emerging farmers in 2010 derives from the

perfect storm that surrounded emerging Rooibos fairtrade entry. Not only is this commodity sector marked by volatile pricing that is exacerbated by product drought and glut cycles (SARC 2010a), the number of Rooibos cooperative members rapidly expanded during a time of pricing downturn, and at the same time as hired-labor producers entered FLO markets.

My research also uncovered a number of emerging farmer opportunities, many of which are connected to project outcomes. Among the communities participating in this project, two associations have transitioned into cooperative status. Driefontein, which was loosely connected to our work, has gained fairtrade certification and remains involved with Rooibos Ltd. The Strandveld group has been actively engaging in a CSR initiative in conjunction with Cape Natural Tea Products and Woolworths (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2010). Perhaps most importantly, 13 emerging Rooibos farmer leaders representing seven community groupings in the Wupperthal, Elim, and Nieuwoudtville regions have completed a rigorous training, research, and networking program. Due to their hard work, emerging farmers have secured formal representation within SARC. Numerous Rooibos industry actors likewise engaged in this project, with some providing direct training to the farmer leaders and others offering company tours or other forms of networking support. By adapting the PCNR framework—perhaps as a SARC portfolio—industry operatives may more effectively align with fair trade and other organizational counterparts to bring emerging farmers into market opportunities and industry forums.

In South Africa, the civil society/business dichotomy is less severe than in many other parts of the world, and Rooibos network development has been the result of coordinated—if sometimes contentious—actions orchestrated by a heady mix of NGO, governmental, and private enterprise actors. For example, South Africa's wine industry has emerged as a global

biodiversity pioneer, and certain Rooibos actors are seeking to replicate wine's progressive alignment via the Right Rooibos campaign. As the industry's umbrella body, SARC's primary function is to align Rooibos groups via research portfolios and campaign involvement, and SARC's Portfolios' Manager is interested in expanding emerging farmer and worker involvement to all its portfolios, though she recognizes the technical challenges in achieving this. Multiple standards and certification programs likewise are entering the Rooibos sector to ensure social and environmental guarantees, and producer support is available to emerging groups. However, certification and industry efforts largely remain separate, and this lack of inter-network coordination is inefficient. Moreover, while there have been nascent efforts to brand the concept of BEE tea, formal BBBEE protocols have been designed to work within the context of commercial firms and strategies have yet to be fully problematized within the emerging farmer context. This study demonstrates that the emerging farmer question is salient and should be more explicitly addressed within BBBEE arenas.

As emerging farmers gain their voice in the networks informing their livelihoods, they are demanding to be heard. The topic of structural inequality remains politically explosive, and few want to explicitly discuss the existence of de facto racism, sexism, or other forms of social exclusion, but despite this reticence, many industry operatives recognize the multiple factors in which differing production groups share in common, and some have demonstrated a commitment to reaching across perceived social divisions, although change is incremental and far too slow for more radically minded agents. Thus, the Rooibos sector faces a great deal of potential, but outcomes remain inconclusive. Similarly to our broader globalizing world, South Africa remains a nation marked by crosscutting divisions and surprising unity, desperate peril and hopeful promise, unprecedented challenges and multifaceted opportunities. For fair market and industry

actors, the challenge lies in harnessing a sense of togetherness—without replicating inefficient us-versus-them ideologies—to deliver upon fair market promises and to capture the vast potentials of a more relationally oriented trading system.

At the local level, emerging Rooibos communities face similar challenges as their broader network colleagues, but they also proffer a great deal of insight for those willing to listen. First, the communities participating in this project are, in many ways, sustainability pioneers, and they may more closely participate within and inform industry-level biodiversity developments as a means of strengthening emerging farmer involvement in a promising network portfolio. Second, the emerging farmers participating in this project expressly and repeatedly stated the necessity of achieving unified action, and they also stressed the importance of mutual respect and support. Many of the communities have been rocked by divisions that reflect broader network conflicts, but farmers have depended upon strong familial and community-based ties to remain resilient during these times of significant challenge, and their successful strategies may help inform improvements to higher-level technical support. Given their critical lack of land access, emerging Rooibos communities must differentiate in order to secure socioeconomic sustainability. In addition to strengthening cooperative functioning, the communities may also invest in additional income-generation opportunities, such as pursuing tourism growth via FTTSA certification, developing small enterprise potentials, and exploring prospects for Rooibos value addition. Network actors may assist in such efforts by streamlining support via inter-agency collaboration.

Finally, sociopolitical dimensions are paramount, and while such topics tend to generate unease, power differentials cannot be mitigated without open and tolerant discussions. South Africa is continuing to undergo profound social transformations. As post-Apartheid reforms and

globalization processes challenge social roles and relations, the spirit of pluralism continues to inspire and unite the nation; thus further network democratization may help ameliorate the sociopolitical dimensions blocking socioeconomic progress. The problem lies in securing more democratic functioning at higher levels of operation where more extensive bureaucratic protocols are necessary. Rooibos network actors experience greater levels of geographic dispersion and are more socially differentiated than are local producers operating in small and tight-knit communities where consensus-based decision making may be scrupulously followed. However, diverse Rooibos groups may cultivate a greater sense of organic solidarity by recognizing the network as a community of interconnected production and trade professionals that support one another with their complementary and specialized services. Writing during the tumultuous industrial revolution, Emile Durkheim surmised that difference-based solidarity would ultimately prove to be a much stronger social glue than more mechanical forms of unity, such as those predicated upon sameness of custom, skin, sex, or age (Durkheim 1984). It is difficult to imagine a world in which these social markers no longer dictate human relational patterns, but I believe this message holds more power than ever in our current context of globalization, intercultural (dis)connection, and rapidly evolving differentiation.

To conclude, the emerging Rooibos network is facing age-old inequalities, new concerns, and provocative opportunities. This professional community is by no means static, nor is it wholly united, but it is guided by a common cultural tradition and a distinct way of life. Just as emerging farmers forge alliances with their neighbors to live a life of rugged independence, their broader network colleagues form ties with one another in a spirit of opportunism. Global trade networks may learn from these national- and local-level forms of solidarity to improve multinational market functioning, and fairtrade leaders may institute peace and reconciliation

mechanisms to help resolve multilateral conflicts. The world is becoming more interconnected whether people want it to be or not, and while the ‘manic logic of global capitalism’ may not be desirable, or even fully understood, fair market and commodity network leaders can choose to be prepared, or not (Greider 1997). By ensuring the more complete participation of those who live with less, fair traders may learn how to resolve movement inequities and enhance benefits (Di'Tomaso et al. 2007; Herring 2009; Paulson et al. 2009).

Future Research

Scaling-up Participatory Methods for Sustainable Markets

Participatory research approaches have long been used to frame development and/or policy reform in a variety of domains, ranging from education to agrarian production (Selener 1997). The highly reflexive nature of participatory approaches may represent their core strength, but praxis can be nebulous and messy (MacIntyre 2008). The question is how to scale up PAR in a way that enables some degree of replicability while maintaining optimum flexibility. During time of research, SKA was struggling with a similar concern in terms of developing training material, and their solution was to develop modular materials from which future trainers could pick and choose when developing workshops. Their approach inspired me to view theories and methods in the same way, and thereby envision a solution to the conundrum of PAR replicability. The PCNR Model detailed in Table 2.4 at the end of Chapter Two should therefore be viewed as a modular toolbox of concepts which may adapted to suit particular project needs. In terms of future research, my goal is to test for PCNR scalability. This may be done by scaling up project outcomes within the Rooibos sector through the development of a new project cycle, either led by myself or others. It will be necessary to test and refine the approach in other

commodity sectors and regions as well. One of my ongoing goals is to bring less-advantaged participants into educational and policy forums so that they may be directly involved in framing and sharing research information, and by conducting PCNR with a variety of groups, I ultimately envision using long-distance learning technology to bring nodes of commodity networkers together to share information and coordinate actions. My hope is that a variety of scholars and practitioners will build upon PCNR by experimenting with the process in their own way. Future applications must be adapted to suit specific agendas, but by retaining major PCNR components, multiple investigations will provide insight into methodological reliability. Testing for reliability will require stringent focus upon monitoring and evaluation.

With this in mind, I have developed a set of baseline indicators which I outline at the end of Chapter Three, and I replicate the core project team indicators below in Table 8.1. The broader array of baseline indicators are designed to operate at multiple units of analysis and project teams may incorporate or discard various components to suit specific project dimensions. In other words, a Rooibos project driven by a differing project team may engage global and national indicators to longitudinally track Rooibos sector factors, but merely use my team-specific indicators to inform their own pre-project planning. For teams engaging in multiple project cycles, the longitudinal tracking of team-based indicators may comprise part of a broader project monitoring and evaluation program. Finally, note that I list farmer-leader weaknesses as ‘varied’ in order to ensure individual privacy, but during the PAToT process, SKA actively assessed learner performance and communicated strengths as well as areas for improvement to each leader. The leaders did the same for us, and SKA maintains records of these peer assessments, which proved invaluable in terms of developing multi-directional communication channels.

Table 8.1: Project Team Monitoring and Evaluation

Analysis	Farmer Leaders	Project
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic/cohesive • Capabilities • Leadership • Communication • Solution-driven • Equality-minded • Hardworking • Confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRSP Funding • Partnership • Teamwork • Vision/strategies • Multitasking • Communication • Coordination • Serendipity
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Juggling work • Over ambitious • Short timeframe
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAToT and PAR • Networking • Public speaking • Co-learning • PIE and PAP • Fundraising • Youth engagement • Representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capabilities • Farmer oriented • Momentum • Industry support • Lessons learned • Sustainability and scalability • Co-authorship
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources • Short-lived project • Multiple responsibilities • Low payment • Rooibos conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation • Rooibos conflict • Learning curve • Funding & time • Micro-politics • Sustainability
Vision	Emerging farmer fair-market access and industry representation; integrated value chain	

Lessons Learned

All projects are subject to learning curves. The reflexive nature of PAR-based actions enables investigators to adapt and improve functioning along the way, but meaningful work will always generate broader tensions that may be viewed as lessons learned. Some issues are minor and easily resolved in retrospect: for example, our team should have systematized SWOT-V analysis as a reflective activity for team members to complete on a quarterly basis. In future

applications, this strategy will serve as an excellent tool for project monitoring and supply good qualitative data. Other lessons learned are more challenging. One major project weakness was that we did too much in too little time, and while we united to achieve the challenging goals that we had set, at times the furious pace threatened team functioning. The time problem derived from the fact that our original grant proposal was quite exhaustive. When drafting the proposal I employed the strategy of breadth in order to ensure maximum project flexibility as I knew that PAR-based engagement would require such leverage. This strategy was successful in terms of satisfying our funders who were delighted that we achieved our ambitious promises—but SKA had comprehensive plans, the farmer leaders had their own demands for expansion, and our collective convergence required adding more activities to an already full schedule.

Our project team comprised scholars, practitioners, and rural agriculturalists, and as such groups operate according to differing time demands, our work customs varied. Training sessions that are intense for a scholar accustomed to long hours of intellectual labor may be doubly punishing to those who are more accustomed to hands-on work. Yet we were not able to allocate sufficient levels of time to participatory data analysis due to critical time shortages, and in a few cases, we had to cut into scheduled free time to hold sessions that had not been scheduled during preliminary project planning. The farmer leaders understood these constraints and remained determinedly focused despite the long working hours, but they finally threatened mutiny during their first Cape Town visit at the start of the final project quarter. Some of the leaders had not visited the area before and had been excited to see the sights; yet the facilitators' agenda was to use this time together as an opportunity to accomplish even more work. We apologized by scheduling in a fun trip to Cape Town attractions during their next visit, but the time issue

remained. Funders tend to demand enormous outputs on tight budgets in short time frames, and these demands are exacerbated when adding the additional layer of PAR.

I am not certain how to resolve the PCNR depth/breadth tension, but I did learn two critical lessons from my time in the field: (1) less is more, and (2) scheduling fun time is essential for wellbeing. While these lessons will inform future PAR cycles, I believe that the lesson in simplicity may more broadly inform the depth/breadth dynamic. Globalization scholars seeking to bridge the global/local gap must develop more sophisticated analyses of the complex processes informing our interconnected world; yet as the old adage states, it can be hard to see the forest through the trees. It is necessary to develop elegant models that maximize theoretical and methodological efficacy.

Key Recommendations

Despite best intentions, development projects often reinforce a state of dependency in which people remain unable to take charge of their own livelihoods. At worst, projects may destabilize and/or demoralize already struggling communities. Active capacity building and equitable participation can help reverse this process, but to achieve sustainability, historically disadvantaged communities must have access to the enabling environments necessary for capacity building. Academic and practitioner forums have noted the importance of bringing farmers into projects as participatory stakeholders rather than as beneficiaries who must passively receive pre-determined assistance; yet given the numerous constraints facing development agencies, involvement is all too often superficial. Everyone makes mistakes, but with effective leadership, these become opportunities. In the words of one cooperative actor:

We must all admit we were wrong. When we start to admit we are wrong we can say we are so sorry. Then we can forgive each other and start the opportunity of a new beginning.

Peace and reconciliation precepts lay at the core of South Africa's nation-building process, and this country's strategies may inform the development of fair trade protocols for movement reconciliation. Whereas global fair market entities and emerging Rooibos networks share similar disturbances wrought by systemic inequalities, charismatic leaders throughout these networks are demonstrating that challenges are surmountable when groups align. The PCNR framework offers scope for more efficient positioning.

Table 8.2 draws from action research findings to provide a set of network recommendations. Note that I published a similar table in a report that I disseminated to participating actors within the Rooibos network at project end, but have subsequently added the academic dimension in response to a provocative email in which I received from a participating SAFN representative. Not only did he point out the necessity of developing key recommendations for engaged scholars, he also asked "who is going to take action and own the implementation of these recommendations"? My answer is simple, yet hard to achieve. Everyone who is involved in emerging Rooibos efforts, or whom otherwise benefits from emerging farmer production, has a responsibility to take action. As a scholar, my most recent involvement has been to finalize data analysis and PCNR framing; and to ensure accessibility to this information I am freely disseminating my doctoral dissertation to project participants. Network operatives may take ownership of the recommendations that most resonate with them, and I encourage groups to use the methodology that I have developed in conjunction with my project team. Indeed, SAFN may find the PCNR model suitable for strengthening its growing technical assistance program.

Table 8.2: Key Recommendations

Analysis	Key Recommendations
Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wupperthal emerging farmers should work with certification bodies to seek organizational solutions to ongoing cooperative challenges—for example, the potential of establishing a two-tier cooperative system • Farmers should actively seek projects that invest in farmer and management capacity building and/or telecommunications infrastructure
Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations should provide ongoing technical assistance to emerging farmers and include the leadership group in preliminary planning processes to ensure that projects deliver the services farmers most need
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry representatives should collaborate with the leadership group in production planning and market development initiatives
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholars should collaborate with practitioners on applied research agendas that generate real-world outcomes as well as drive theoretical and methodological advancement • Scholars also must maintain the independent functioning necessary for critical scholarly investigation
All Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory information exchange and action planning may be used to expand collaboration and strengthen farmer participation in lucrative markets • All groups should develop stronger communication networks with one another to improve support quality and maximize market potential

Figure 8.2 comprises a conceptual drawing developed by my project partner in order to examine the question of project sustainability.

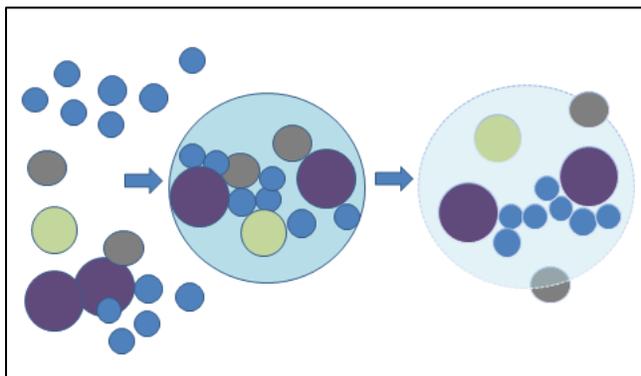


Figure 8.2: Sustaining Participation and Impacts

Source: Kruger 2011

This schematic captures the rather more complex considerations behind SAFN's question. Sustaining impacts and scaling up participation represent core post-project challenges, but the team has sought to address this in multiple ways. Another major project cycle would be ideal in terms of systematically generating network-level PIE and PAP, but structural issues make it difficult to pursue the funding for another long-term project. However, since my departure, SKA has been deepening Rooibos efforts by incorporating the farmer leaders into other projects. Also, numerous network groups are active in emerging Rooibos efforts, and some of these entities convened at our policy seminar in late 2010; thus this core group of actors may be well positioned to drive ongoing efforts.

As global trade networks shift from post-Fordist patterns to more diffuse systems of governance, both fair traders and industry networkers are well poised to strengthen their position within world markets, but sustainability precepts will increasingly require long-term collaboration. In order to meet the high social standards demanded by conscious consumers, alternative certification systems such as fairtrade must decentralized decision making. Movement decentralization will enable actors to construct polycentric forms of governance, but if these are to effectively incorporate less-advantaged producers, commodity networks must be democratized and producer knowledge should be actively integrated into network functioning.

Polycentric forms of governance hold a great deal of democratic promise as well as commercial potential, but without effective management, commodity networks run the risk of being increasingly buffeted by rapidly changing market trends, rather than harnessing these in the spirit of collective enterprise. I reprint the polycentric governance diagram from Chapter Five to illustrate the various groups that may be involved in a given commodity network.

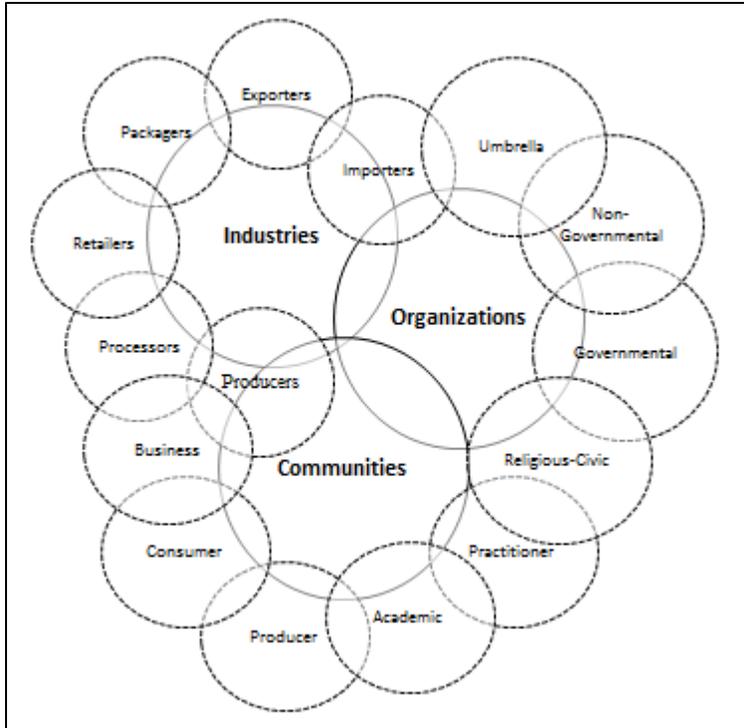


Figure 8.3: Commodity Networking for Polycentric Governance

When building polycentric trade networks, stakeholders should agree to focus on cohesion in order to minimize conflict. Racism, sexism, and other forms of intolerance remain structurally embedded in contemporary social institutions as well as in the mindsets of individuals, thus networkers must provide more visible forums for intercultural dialogue. Scholars also have a responsibility to help practitioners develop viable solutions for the pressing concerns facing twenty-first century economic growth. Indeed, scholarly activities have real world consequences, and as a teacher of race and gender, I believe that the previous two decades of critical deconstructionism have helped to engender and prolong a divisive era of identity politics. While the exploration of crosscutting identities has led to important insights and outcomes, unchecked academic deconstructionism may recreate rather than ameliorate longstanding social divisions. Pluralists have long noted the importance of maintaining social

equilibrium within the context of social change; thus scholars now may prioritize inter-group reconciliation by examining how social change initiatives may be driving the formation of global identity.

To conclude this section on key recommendations, scholars and practitioners alike need to regain control of our knowledge-based tools. By so doing, we may innovate smarter procedures and reflexive regulations that possess the power to direct markets toward more sustainable ends, while leaving the playing field open to competitive advantage. However, without charismatic leadership and a firm commitment to cultural sensitivity as well as more democratic functioning, regulation may become more unilateral, opaque, and ultimately inefficient. Given recent advances in the fields of physics, we now know that the nature of reality is not as solid as we think. By recognizing the fluid nature of social reality, networkers can better recognize spaces for individual and collective agency, and by so doing, deescalate conflict. In other words, twenty-first century commodity networkers must shift from rock logic to water logic.

Letting go is part of the process. By giving up degrees of control, practitioners are able to build teamwork, share authority, and optimize individual participant strengths. At the same time, wholly equal participation in large forums is impossible. Organizations have hierarchies for a reason, and at times leaders are called upon to make executive decisions; thus commodity networkers must examine specific network dimensions to ensure optimum functioning. By incorporating stakeholder groups into the process to streamline growth, polycentric management may diffuse power relations and open scope for new forms of agency; but when leaders make assumptions about the needs of their diverse constituents, the networking process will falter. Just as scholars should enter fieldwork with the intention of proving their hypothesis incorrect, action

research operatives may apply the scientific method by entering into the process with the intention of recognizing and challenging their assumptions through dialogue.

Conclusion

To conclude, action research outcomes are promising. Not only did the involvement of farmer leaders in the research process enable a significantly deeper understanding of emerging Rooibos farmer challenges and opportunities, the team found that the PCNR approach provides the flexibility necessary for broad-based action. The concept of an integrated training, research, and networking framework is well suited to promoting participatory engagement and numerous networkers are working to align interests via collaborative information exchange. As efforts continue, more genuine forms of participation may help groups realize multifaceted sustainability directives. Via participatory training, research, and commodity networking, this project strove to enhance racial equity and combat poverty to improve the quality of life of emerging farmer households in a region marked by rural poverty. We ensured gender equity by bolstering the participation of female farmers in all aspects of project engagement, and our ongoing attention to diverse social groupings ultimately ensured project successes.

Project tensions were minor, and these derived largely from our attempt to engage a cyclical process from within a linear timeframe. We sought to empower one another in order to expand theoretical, methodological, and technical knowledge, but had to deliver quarterly reports and measurable outcomes. Moreover, commodity networks tend to be highly charged arenas, and as the findings outlined in previous chapters attest, the Rooibos network was experiencing profound turmoil and transformation throughout project involvement. Our more ephemeral goals outstripped all of our individual capacities, and our efforts to build unity often ran counter to

external tensions that threatened division. Yet quarterly demands kept us focused, and by spending time with one another, the project team was able to develop a strong sense of camaraderie enabling us to collectively achieve outcomes that at times appeared impossible. I believe that the differing insights and technical strengths of project team members proved our greatest source of strength, for our diverse talents and perspectives enabled us to meet lofty objectives. Though our efforts were not perfect, procedural inaccuracies have provided us the insights necessary for streamlining future applications.

PAR provides an excellent conceptual framework for multilateral engagement, but it lacks specific tools to accomplish the job. This project scaled up PAR by aligning it with complementary theoretical and methodological precepts. Encompassing PAR within a broader PAToT program enabled us to more effectively transfer knowledge and skills to one another, and thereby foster PIE- and PAP. In other words, the PNCR approach may appear to be liberal, but it also is conservative. It connects the rich and deeply embedded philosophic traditions of humanitarianism with functionalist pragmatism. To my mind, such a critical functionalism is desperately needed to restore social equilibrium during this period of rapid, global change.

In sum, this dissertation reflects a dynamic chronicle of progress, though one that is not yet fully realized. It is not a traditional tale of modernization; nor is it a difference-emphasizing postmodern narrative. Findings are neither locked into one locale nor spread all over the world, but as a grounded account of globalization, this body of work embodies all of these elements. In telling the story, I sought to remain ideologically open yet action focused and by so doing, expanded my own thinking to incorporate multiple standpoints as valid descriptors of social experience. My primary purpose was to ground PCNR synthesis within the context of a particular commodity chain as I worked to derive participatory commodity networking from

commodity network analysis. Via active engagement with talented people, I was privileged to bear witness to the complex processes of social change as these unfolded around me in a particular place and time.

Emerging Rooibos producers face very real and pressing challenges and prospects are not rosy. Nevertheless, this commodity sector has achieved impressive, if not always optimal efforts and it continues to engage in the struggle for change. To my mind, the PCNR approach reflects the opportunistic mood of a vibrantly emerging Global South and more specifically of a nation and continent transcending the destructive forces of longstanding Apartheid and colonialism. As Northern economies likewise struggle to emerge from decades of dysfunctional neoliberalism and shock-and-awe greed, people in these nations may look toward Southern solutions to sustainable development concerns that affect us all. To close, I quote South African anti-Apartheid activist Steve Biko (1978: 98), who lost his life to the struggle for human freedom and dignity. Biko faced ugly realities without flinching and still dared to dream of a better future. As our fractured yet increasingly entangled world faces similar conflicts and potentials as those that he witnessed, may his words may extend well beyond South Africa and generate new meaning in the struggle for global humanity.

We have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible—a more human face.

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APPENDIX A: PROJECT PLANNING

Project Invitation Letter to Farmers

Dear _____,

We are developing a market training program for small Rooibos farmers. This program will include training and support services for Rooibos farmers in your region. Our purpose is to help farmers learn about and access market opportunities, including Fair Trade and organic certification.

We wish to begin by talking to farmer representatives and farmers so that we may learn about the issues you are facing. We would also like to work with you to develop the kinds of training and support services you most need. We hope to train two or more farmer leaders from groups in Niewoudtville, Wupperthal and Elim. We will provide industry recognized training to these leaders and work with them to develop training sessions for small farmers. We are also starting a small farmer Working Group and women's networking group within the South African Rooibos Council so that leaders may attend workshops with organizations to learn more about available services. We hope to use farmer feedback to improve existing services and policies.

We would like to include all small farmers, including Fair Trade and independent PDI producers. The program will involve leader workshops and interviews as well as interviews with individual small farmers. We would very much like to include you and will be contacting you within the next week or two to set up a meeting. Please feel free to contact us should you require any further information. We look forward to meeting with you.

Kind Regards, _____

Project Invitation Letter to Organizations

Dear _____,

Sandra Kruger & Associates has been contracted by the Center for Fair & Alternative Trade (CFAT) at Colorado State University and the Institute for Poverty, Land & Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape to implement a market-access training program within the Rooibos sector. This program is funded via a USAID Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP) grant and has been designed to enhance industry sustainability via the provision of capacity building and market support services for emerging Rooibos farmers. In conjunction with this program, Co-principal Investigator Jennifer Keahey is conducting doctoral thesis research.

We began this program with a research component to examine current market constraints and opportunities and secured participation with various emerging farmer groups operating in Wupperthal, Nieuwoudtville, and Elim. In autumn 2010, we facilitated farmer capabilities assessment workshops within multiple communities to develop program indicators and problematize needs and opportunities for upgrading via social and environmental standards and certification engagement and compliance. Upon completion of each workshop, we held democratic elections to identify local-level farmer leaders for in-depth program involvement. More recently, we have been working with farmer leaders to develop a set of training materials via provision of training-of-trainer (ToT) services in standards and certification and community needs assessment. Jennifer has additionally worked with farmer leaders to conduct in-depth farmer interviews within participating communities. Farmer leaders are now involved in data analysis and plan to share findings with their communities as a step towards developing an emerging farmer action plan.

Finally, we are working with the Empowerment Unit of the South African Rooibos Council (SARC) to institute an Emerging Farmer Working Group and related women's networking group. As part of this process, Jennifer will be conducting interviews with a number of businesses and organizations to identify additional constraints and opportunities for enhanced collaboration. Interview information will inform program efforts as we work with farmer leaders to examine organizational networks and policies, and to develop protocols for further engagement. As your organization has been involved in emerging Rooibos farmer efforts and/or trade, we would very much like to include you in our research and Jennifer will be contacting you within the next week or two to set up an interview.

Please feel free to contact us should you require any further information. We look forward to meeting with you.

Kind Regards, _____

APPENDIX B: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Final Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Matrix

Objective 1: Identify emerging Rooibos farmer market capabilities, opportunities, and constraints				
Activities	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Documentation of Success	Progress to Date (4th Quarter ending January 31, 2011)
<p>1. Conduct global value chain study and actor-network analysis</p> <p>2. Develop capability indicators in conjunction with local stakeholders, with particular focus on gender concerns</p> <p>3. Conduct survey research</p>	<p>Map of global Rooibos value chain, key actors, and market opportunities</p> <p>Locally relevant capabilities indicators for survey use, project monitoring, and evaluation</p> <p>Identified upgrading opportunities for South African Rooibos producers via value added processing and geographical indicators</p> <p>Identified emerging farmer opportunities and constraints, with gender focus</p>	<p>Emerging farmer training materials and services will specifically address the capabilities, opportunities, and constraints identified by the local Rooibos community</p> <p>Gender specific training services and enhanced support for women farmers</p>	<p>Project report in Afrikaans and English will include research findings</p> <p>Four articles to be published in academic and/or trade journals after project completion</p>	<p>All are complete except: survey research, project report, and articles</p> <p>In-depth field research was added to project mid-term and survey research was moved to project end for project evaluation</p> <p>Report to be done at project end</p> <p>Articles will be completed after project end</p>

Objective 2: Develop institutional capacity of South African Rooibos Council to provide an enabling environment for emerging farmers through the implementation of training and support services				
Activities	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Documentation of Success	Progress to Date (4th Quarter ending January 31, 2011)
<p>1. Institute a permanent Emerging Farmer Working Group with gender program in the Rooibos Council Empowerment Unit</p> <p>2. Provide an enabling environment for emerging farmers</p>	<p>Working Group protocols, including gender equity provision</p> <p>Market-access training protocols and materials including farmer's guide to certification systems</p> <p>Provision of space for emerging farmers to network and engage in political advocacy</p> <p>Working Group communications portfolio and democratically elected Steering Committee</p>	<p>Formal Working Group meetings every two months to monitor and evaluate ongoing activities</p> <p>Extension trainer evaluation of training materials prior to and after farmer training implementation</p> <p>Establishment of Rooibos Council emerging farmer groups, including a women's group</p>	<p>Women's Group evaluation of Working Group support services</p> <p>Project report in Afrikaans and English will include inter-agency feedback on Working Group activities and services</p>	<p>All are complete except: Working Group protocols, portfolio, Steering Committee, Women's Group evaluation, and project report</p> <p>Working Group protocols in process; portfolio and steering committee to be complete by end of March 2011</p> <p>Women's Group now fully involved in developing Working Group services to ensure gender equity</p> <p>Report to be done at project end</p>

Objective 3: Implement participatory training services to improved market access prospects for emerging farmers				
Activities	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Documentation of Success	Progress to Date (4th Quarter ending January 31, 2011)
<p>1. Conduct a three day ToT workshop for emerging farmer extension trainers</p> <p>2. Deliver a three half-day training workshop to emerging farmers</p>	<p>Four emerging farmer extension trainers trained in market-access information and participatory research methodology</p> <p>200 emerging farmers and spousal farmworkers trained in fiscal management, biodiversity preservation, Fair Trade and organic certification standards, and packaging and food safety strategies</p>	<p>Extension trainers will be selected from local Rooibos communities and thus be able to provide ongoing information and support to farmers</p> <p>The total Rooibos emerging farmer population, including spousal workers, will have training and support service access</p> <p>Market-based strategies that have been documented to significantly improve smallholder Rooibos farmer market access are known, extended , and adopted</p>	<p>Extension trainer evaluation of ToT workshop</p> <p>Participatory assessment of pilot training workshop and adoption of lessons learned</p> <p>Capability indicators used to measure and document emerging farmer knowledge at end of each workshop</p> <p>Documentation of emerging farmer training evaluations</p> <p>Project report in Afrikaans and English</p>	<p>All complete except: farmer workshops in three community groupings and farmer report</p> <p>To better meet needs, we have significantly expanded objective activities (see Quarterly Reports 1, 2, 3, 4)</p> <p>Farmer workshops to be complete at project end</p> <p>Report to be done at project end</p>

Objective 4: Evaluate project outcomes to analyze existing emerging farmer policies and inform ongoing policy development and reform at both the national and international levels				
Activities	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Documentation of Success	Progress to Date (4th Quarter ending January 31, 2011)
<p>1. Conduct extension trainer workshop to evaluate training materials and stakeholder participation</p> <p>2. Conduct project evaluation and develop Working Group next-step plan</p> <p>3. Facilitate emerging farmer policy workshop and devise next-step plan for ongoing inter-agency collaboration</p>	<p>Project outcomes evaluated to inform Working Group next-step action plan</p> <p>Analysis off B-BBEE, WARD, Women on Farms, and Fair Trade South Africa emerging farmer policies and protocols and identification of likely points of intervention</p> <p>Communication of findings to FLO to inform the development of emerging farmer standards at the global-level of Fair Trade governance</p>	<p>Strategies for training material and delivery improvement are identified and documented</p> <p>Strategies for improving Working Group support services are identified and adopted</p> <p>Enhanced inter-agency awareness of emerging farmer constraints and prospects will inform policies and protocols</p> <p>Strengthened inter-agency collaboration to better meet emerging farmer needs</p>	<p>Project report in Afrikaans and English</p> <p>Four articles to be published in academic and/or trade journals after project completion</p>	<p>All complete except: project report and articles</p> <p>Report to be done by project end to communicate findings</p> <p>Articles to be completed after project end</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation integrated into all activities and via mid-term research and final survey</p> <p>Added documentation of new methods manual planned after project end</p>

Final Project Report Narrative

The farmer leaders have continued to develop as a strong group of committed stakeholders. Each has said that they do not wish for the project to come to an end and the group is now discussing strategies for securing ongoing training and funding opportunities so they can

expand their efforts beyond the scope of this project. Perhaps most importantly, our involvement has enabled leaders to significantly improve their public speaking and networking skills. At AGMs and industry events, leaders typically comprised the totality of emerging farmers in attendance. Given the prior lack of representation of emerging farmers at this level, leaders have now established an industry presence and numerous actors have expressed a desire to work with the leadership group to expand farmer-industry information exchange. In addition, researchers have begun to approach us to inquire about hiring leaders to assist with community research endeavors. We hope to capitalize on the positive attention by helping leaders more fully brand their presence via the Emerging Farmer Working Group. In March we will conduct a final farmer leader workshop in conjunction with the Rooibos Council to institutionalize the Emerging Farmer Working Group. We will maintain a strong focus on gender equity during that process. Indeed, all female farmer leaders have chosen to become members of the Working Group and wish to develop the women's networking group as a Working Group branch. During the March session, we will assist female leaders in this process.

Though we greatly expanded upon both the ToT process and farmer training as originally outlined in our initial agreement, we have now finished ToT and are nearing community workshop completion. We have fully developed the final set of training material in modular format so that leaders can identify training topics and put together training booklets for their workshops. Leaders have engaged identified community needs to design individualized community workshops and are in the process of facilitating them. In terms of research, we have likewise expanded upon initial promises to CRSP by integrating an in-depth mid-term research component to strengthen enabling environment and better integrate project monitoring and evaluation. In the third quarter, leaders have remained active in assisting with ongoing research

components, including data analysis and presentation of data to industry, organizational, and academic actors. They have also expressed a desire to take research leadership within their communities by developing a formal research protocol that will enable them to stimulate research engagement in areas in which their communities most need. Leaders are now developing the final project evaluation survey process, in which we are assisting.

Securing attendance at the Policy Seminar proved somewhat problematic given the busy schedules of industry and organizational representatives. We shifted the date to ensure the presence of certification actors due to the importance of their attendance, but this led to diminished presence of other groups. Despite these problems, attendees included a core group of industry and certification actors who are committed to future work with farmer leaders, and who are interested in developing collaborative industry networks to capitalize on sustainable market-access opportunities. This core group included the South African Rooibos Council, numerous certification representatives, processors, and other industry experts. Attendees felt the Policy Seminar represented a critical first-step forward and though this project is ending, we hope expand upon this by hosting a broader Policy Seminar next year to strengthen core engagement and to bring in additional industry actors who were unable to attend this year.

When we first arrived in the Wupperthal communities at project commencement, we found them in disarray due to serious issues occurring within the Rooibos cooperatives. Many farmers were angry because they had not received payment for their crop in years and did not want to become engaged in any Rooibos-related project as they felt Rooibos was a waste of their time. By the end of the fourth quarter, our involvement has generated improvement. Leaders have united to develop an information sharing network that is focused on opportunity rather than conflict, and as they have advanced their knowledge of markets, they have been active in sharing

that information with their communities, which has helped to clear up market and certification misunderstandings. Leaders are now focused on developing potential steps forward. Via their involvement in research and data analysis, they have highlighted the common problems facing farmers and have expressed interest in working with certification bodies to engage bureaucratic solutions to cooperative issues. For example, leaders have discussed the potential of using the Fair Trade system to help their communities organize into first tier cooperatives which may be later united under an umbrella cooperative so as to minimize the potential for conflict while maximizing opportunities for inter-community collaboration. During the Policy Seminar, leaders spoke openly with certification actors about these issues and outlined some of their ideas for moving forward. Certification experts were impressed by this dialogue and have stated their support in terms of further pursuing such solutions and in considering the development of specific emerging farmer policies. The communities have responded positively to leadership engagement and there is growing interest in leader efforts as community members note the benefit of having trained leaders who are able to share critical information between community groups as well as to the broader industry.

While we worked hard to achieve project objectives, leaders encouraged us to surpass original goals. They have displayed outstanding levels of enthusiasm, professionalism, and support and as a result, information exchange has appropriately advanced in multiple directions. They have been involved in our efforts to develop a holistic methodological approach to producer support and have encouraged us to think beyond traditional boundaries to better integrate our approach. At the same time, numerous top-down projects within the same industry and region appear to be failing to achieve objectives or sustain promised outcomes, leading to production and market crises. Indeed, past failures may be partially responsible for the

Wupperthal Rooibos tensions mentioned above. We feel this demonstrates the importance of bringing all relevant groups into projects as participatory stakeholders rather than treating farmers as beneficiaries who must passively receive pre-determined assistance. Far from being passive recipients, our leadership group is now capable of facilitating the transfer of critical local knowledge to industry and organizational actors, as well as to social researchers and scientists. Their ongoing involvement in research and project processes will ultimately enable all interested parties to secure more accurate information and thus more sustainable outcomes. We intend to outline our methodological approach in the final CRSP project report as well as in the project report that we disseminate to all stakeholders.

APPENDIX C: FIELD RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWS

Sample Action Researcher Field Contract

Expectations for Translator:

1. Will be present during agreed upon dates.
2. Will be present at all interviews to translate.
3. Will translate as accurately as possible.
4. Will show respect and be as transparent as possible to all participants.
5. Will maintain full confidentiality of all personal information that is discussed in interviews.

Expectations for Researcher:

1. Researcher will pay translator Rand XXX.
2. Researcher will pay petrol costs for official trips.
3. Researcher will include translator in data analysis and interview processes as much as translator wishes to be included.

Agreed upon Dates: XX-XX September

We agree to the terms of this contract and if we negotiate any changes, these will only be implemented if mutually agreed upon and written into the contract.

Emerging Rooibos Farmer Socioeconomic Interview Questions

Hello, I am a researcher working on a project about the experiences of small-scale Rooibos farmers. I do not work for the government or the processing company. I am a doctoral student and I am doing these interviews for my studies.

Before we begin the interview, it is important to share with you some things about this research so that there are no secrets. First, I will tell you how and why we are collecting the information. Second, I will tell you how we will use the information that we get. Third, I will tell you how we are organizing the information.

Let's talk about how we are collecting the information. We are talking to about 60 farmers from all over the Wupperthal area and in Elim and Nieuwoudtville. We are doing this so that we can understand the general situation of small-scale Rooibos farmers in South Africa. We are not choosing who we want to talk to. We have selected farmers randomly so that we can get complete information from as many different farmers as possible.

We are collecting this information for two reasons. First, I will use the information to write a paper for my professors, and after this is done, I hope to write a book and some stories about Rooibos farmers in South Africa. In my country, Rooibos is becoming a popular tea and people there are interested in knowing more about this tea and the farmers who grow it. Second, I am working on a project with Sandra Kruger to find out ways that farmers can get more money for their crop. We are working with 14 small-scale farmer leaders who were elected by their communities at the beginning of this project. We have all signed a contract that we will not share any private information with anyone. We may ask some personal questions, but in our writings we will only talk about the general situation of Rooibos farmers, things like problems and opportunities. Once we have collected information from all the interviews, we will organize the

information and write some general notes. The farmer leaders will share these notes with all the communities, so that everyone can give advice and participate equally. Once everyone agrees with the information, the farmer leaders can work with each other and the communities to make an action plan to fix some of the problems and help each other get more money for their Rooibos. The important thing here is that the communities can control and use the information together. I am not the expert...you and other farmers are the experts. You also have control over the interview. If I ask a question and you don't want to answer it, you don't need to. That is ok. If we finish the interview and you have other information you want to share that I didn't ask about, please feel free to share it. This interview isn't formal. It is like a conversation to share knowledge to each other. Since we won't be writing any private information, you can feel free to talk honestly to us. The more information you can give us today, the more we can know. We know there have been problems with communication about Rooibos, so our hope is to get complete information to share with everyone, so that everyone knows the situation and can work together to solve the general problems that farmers share.

Now let's talk about how we are organizing the information. This interview will last for about 1 hour. In this interview I want to learn about the experiences you and others have as Rooibos tea farmers. I will ask some questions and you can answer them. What I would like is for you to explain your experiences as a Rooibos farmer—things like what problems and opportunities you face. I want to be able to explain the general experiences and concerns of farmers like yourself. If you don't mind, I will record our conversation on my tape-recorder since sometimes I cannot write things down fast enough. Will that be ok?

Definitions

I am going to ask you questions about your work as a farmer and your economic wellbeing. This will help me understand your situation as a farmer. I am going to give you some definitions now so that you can see how I am going to organize the information you give me.

First I am interested in learning about your “conditions” as a farmer. Condition means a situation. How things are in your life, work, or community right now. Usually conditions are facts that everyone agrees with. For example bad roads in Wupperthal.

Next, I want to learn what “opportunities” you feel you have as a farmer. Opportunities are conditions, things that help you get what you want in your life, work, or community. These are usually opinions because everyone is different.

Third, I want to know what kinds of problems you have as a farmer. Problems are also conditions that make it hard for you to get what you want in your life, work, or community. Like opportunities, they are usually opinions because everyone is different. For example, bad roads are a fact. But an old man may see them as a problem because it is difficult for him to travel to town. A young man may see the bad roads as an opportunity to get money for work to repair the roads. What questions do you have for me now?

Today, I will be asking questions around a series of 4 themes or topics. I have developed questions around these themes so that I can learn about your social and economic situation. These themes are: (1) general information, (2) social welfare, (3) economic activities, (4) certified market activities (such as organic how you are trying to get more money for your crop), and (5) summary questions.

We will go through each section of questions slowly. If you don't understand something, please feel free to ask as many questions as you need. What questions do you have for me now before we begin?

General Information: In this section I will ask you very general questions about your situation as a farmer.

1. Are you a man or a woman?
2. How old are you?
3. Are you married?
4. How many children do you have?
 - 4.1 How many girls and boys?
 - 4.2 Where do they live?
5. What is your race?
6. What languages do you speak?
7. If you speak more than 1 language, what is your first language?
8. What is the highest grade you have completed in school?
9. How many people live in your house? (Permanently? On weekends?)
10. Where were you born?

Social Welfare: Now I'm going to ask you some questions to find out about the things you have in your life that help you.

11. How would you describe your house?
12. Do you have electricity?
13. Do you have a toilet or water in the house?
14. What kinds of things are in your house that make your life comfortable, things like furniture or electronics?

15. How much free time do you have from farming and house work? What do you do with your free time?

16. How safe do you feel living in your community? Why/why not?

17. Can you get transport when you need to leave your community? If yes, is it affordable? Is it reliable?

18. What do you do when you are sick to get better?

19. How expensive is medicine?

20. Do the children of your house go to school? How long has each of your children gone to school and where does each go?

21. Has there been a time when you couldn't afford the basic needs of your family? How did you get by?

22. Thinking about the things that we just talked about, how would you describe your living conditions in general?

Economic Activities: Now I'm going to ask you some questions to find out about your work, the ways that you make money, and how you use the money you make.

23. What is your primary work?

24. What is your secondary work?

25. What crops do you farm and what animals do you have?

26. How much of the vegetables, fruit, meat do you sell and how much do you keep for yourself?

27. How many tons of Rooibos do you farm?

28. How do you find out about market prices for your Rooibos crop and who do you sell your crop to?

29. Has this changed in the past 3 years? If yes, who did you previously sell your crop to?
30. How much do you sell your crop for? Has this changed in the past 3 years? If yes, how much did you sell your crop for in the past three years?
31. How much money were you paid for your Rooibos in 2007? 2008? 2009? 2010?
32. What other ways do you get money?
33. What percent of money in your house do you get from Rooibos farming?
34. Who decides what the money should be spent on in your house?
35. If there are other people in the house who bring home money, what is the money they earn spent on and who decides this?
36. In the last 2 years have you had any savings? If yes, what are you saving for? If no, could you have savings if you were being paid for your Rooibos?

Rooibos Market Activities: Now I'm going to ask you some questions to find out how you are trying to get more money for your crop.

37. Are you currently a member of a farmer cooperative? [If yes, answer the following. If not, go past this section and ask the second set of Question 37.]
 - 37.1. Which cooperative do you belong to?
 - 37.2. Why did you choose to become a member of a cooperative?
 - 37.3. Who does the cooperative sell to?
 - 37.4. What do you know about the buyers that your cooperative sells to?
 - 37.5. What kinds of market certifications does your cooperative maintain?
 - 37.6. What do buyers or market certifications require you or the cooperative to do?

37.7. What do you think of these requirements?

37.8 How does your coop share information? Does your community have a coop committee? How does it work/why not?

37.9. What has your cooperative done with the Fair Trade social premium? How does it decide how to use it?

37.10 What is the guaranteed Fair Trade minimum price?

37.11. What is the price your cooperative can get for dual certification (organic and Fair Trade)?

37.12. Do you think that being a member of a cooperative is good for farmers? Why/why not? What benefits does membership provide you?

37.13. Have you had any contact with Fair Trade groups that are not your cooperative? (Such as FLO or other Fair Trade groups including other farmers, buyers, or organizations?)

37.14. Have you had any contact with representatives from other people, for example people who are offering training or project involvement? What have these people offered you? Did you participate? What did you think about the project or training that you got?

37.15 Have there been any projects in your community in the last 5 years? If yes, what have they been and who did them?

37.16 What kinds of learning opportunities or projects would you like to see happen in your community?

37. Are you currently a member of a farmer cooperative? If no, answer the following. [If you asked the above set of Question 37, do not ask these questions and skip to summary section.]

- 37.1. Have you previously been a member of a farmer cooperative?
- 37.2. If yes, why are you no longer a member? [If yes then go back and have respondent answer questions from the above set of Question 37. If no, then continue asking the questions in this set.]
- 37.3. Have you considered becoming a member of a cooperative?
- 37.4. What requirements do you think membership would have you to follow?
- 37.5. What do you think about these requirements?
- 37.6. In general, would membership in a cooperative be good for farmers? Why/why not?
What benefits would membership provide?
- 37.7. What price do cooperative farmers receive for their crop?
- 37.8. Tell me what you know about market certifications such as organic, Fair Trade, or UTZ?
- 37.9. What requirements do you think these markets would have you follow?
- 37.10. What do you think about those requirements?
- 37.11. What is the guaranteed Fair Trade minimum price?
- 37.12. What is the minimum price for dual certification (Fair Trade and organic)?
- 37.13. In general, would participation in certified markets be good for farmers? What benefits do you think your involvement in certified markets would give you?
- 37.14. Have you had any contact with any Fair Trade groups?
- 37.15. Have you had any contact with people from other groups, for example people who are offering training or project involvement? What have these people offered you? Did you participate? What did you think about the project or training that you got?

37.16 Have there been any projects in your community in the last 5 years? If yes, what have they been and who did them?

37.17 What kinds of learning activities or projects would you like to see happen in your community?

Summary Questions: Now I'm going to ask you some questions to review what we've learned.

38. Where do you want to be in 5 years in your work and life?

39. What kinds of problems do you have in your family, community, or work that make it hard for you to create a better life for yourself?

40. What kinds of opportunities do you have in your family, community, or work that can help you make a better life for yourself?

41. In general, how would you describe your problems in relation to other farmers inside Wupperthal? Do you have it better or worse than them?

Now that we've gone through these questions, let's try to summarize by going back to the idea of general conditions, constraints, and opportunities. We've talked a lot about farmer conditions. Now let's try to think about general problems and opportunities that you think many small Rooibos farmers in your area have.

42. What general constraints/problems of Rooibos farmers in your area.

43. What general opportunities of Rooibos farmers in your area have.

44. Think about our conversation. You have many strengths and opportunities. What can you do to help fix the problems in your community and help other farmers?

We have finished the interview. Now that we are done, do you have any questions you want to ask me or other ideas or things you want to share?

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with me. I know you are very busy and I am really grateful for your support and knowledge.

Extra questions for farmer leaders to discuss over the week

1. Now that we have gone through this interview, what kinds of questions did I ask that made the most sense and gave the best information?
2. Now that we have gone through this interview, what kinds of questions did I ask that were confusing and could be changed to get better information?
3. I want you to know that I have been trying to listen to everything you have said. My Afrikaans is bad, and I still don't understand a lot. But I have tried to use your insights to make these questions. What kinds of questions should I ask that I haven't asked?
4. Would you like to be more involved in the interview process? Even if you are not working as an interpreter, I can include you if you want. If you are too busy, I understand especially since I cannot pay you. But I can share with you my knowledge about how to do community needs assessments. All I need is for you is to help me understand the information I get from the interviews. This can just mean having conversations together in the evening, but it will help me a lot. It will also help you to start thinking about how

you can organize your own community needs assessment surveys later this year. Doing community needs assessments will help you work with other farmer leaders to develop an action plan for the Emerging Farmer Working Group. An action plan will help you use your collective strengths and skills to make your voice heard in the industry. It will also help you to figure out which organizations may be able to help you so you may go to them to share your problems and your action plan. Would you like to help me?

Farmer Leader Sociopolitical Interview Questions

In our last interview, I asked you questions about your work as a farmer and how much money you make. Today, we're going to build from the training that we did on social and political concepts so that I can learn about your social and political experiences and how these experiences influence your farming conditions, problems and opportunities.

Today, I will be asking a group of questions for each of the five social concepts that we discussed in our training. I will then ask a group of questions for each of the two political concepts that we discussed in our training. Many researchers who have worked with farmers all over the world have found that these social and political concepts are important to farmers' lives. Over many years, researchers have used these concepts to develop theories so they can explain the kinds of problems and opportunities that farmers have.

I have developed questions around these themes so that I can learn the concepts that best explain small scale Rooibos farmer conditions. By answering my questions, you can tell me which concepts best explain your situation. By asking all of the farmer leaders these questions, we will be able to get more complete information and then work together to choose the best theories to explain Rooibos farmer conditions, problems, and opportunities. I know a lot of theories and I can teach them, but I need your help to choose the theories that best explain the

situation of Rooibos farmers because you have the most knowledge about your work and communities. If we work together, we can do a much better job.

We will go through each group of questions slowly. Remember that this is more like a conversation than an interview. You should feel free to honestly share as much information as possible. If you don't understand something, please feel free to ask as many questions as you need. If you don't want to answer a question, that is ok. You have control over the interview process. May I use my voice recorder again?

When we have finished with all of our interviews, each of us can write some general notes about what we have learned. We can then share them with each other and discuss all the information we have gotten from this research. I will take all of your ideas about the interviews and make some notes about the general conditions, problems, and opportunities of Rooibos farmers. I will also organize these notes by the social and political themes that we discussed in our training. This will help us understand the general situation of farmers. It will also help us think about the strengths and weaknesses in our communities so that we can work together to make an action plan to help solve our problems and take advantage of Rooibos and community opportunities.

When I go back to America, I will write everything that I have learned here for my university. I also plan to write some stories, articles, maybe even a book about the experiences of Rooibos farmers and my experiences doing this research. I would like to include farmer leaders in this process as much as you wish. Since you are helping me choose the theories to explain Rooibos farmer experiences, you will be able to follow what I write. When I start writing articles in a year or two, I can send emails to the farmer leaders to share what I am writing if you are

interested. What do you think of this as a long-term plan? What questions do you have for me now before we begin?

Age

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand age. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “age”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me. Since Rooibos farmers are adults, we are interested in the experiences of adults. I have divided “adult” into three age groups: 18-29 for young adults, 30-64 for middle adults, and 65 or older for elderly) to understand the situation of farmers of different age ranges.

1. To which of these age ranges do you belong?
2. How does your community treat people of different age groups? (children, teenagers, young adults, middle adults, old people?)
3. What roles do people of different age groups play? How are their experiences similar and how are their experiences different?
4. What problems do you have as a member of your age group?
5. What opportunities does your age group give you?
6. How are your problems and opportunities different from people of other age groups in your community?
7. Do you think that your community has age equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.
8. Now let’s think about outside of your community. How does age work when you leave Wupperthal? Is it similar or different to your community?

9. In general, how do South Africans treat people of different ages? (children, teenagers, young adults, middle adults, old people?)
10. What problems do people in your age group have in South Africa?
11. What opportunities do people in your age group have in South Africa?
12. Do you think that South Africa has age equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.
13. How much does your age affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is age to your life chances?

Families

In our training we talked about families. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “family”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

14. To what family do you belong? How many families live in your community?
15. How does your community treat people from different families?
16. What roles do different families play in your community? How are their experiences similar and how are their experiences different?
17. What problems do you have as a member of your family?
18. What opportunities does your family give you?
19. How are your problems and opportunities different from people from other families in your community?
20. Do you think that your community has family equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.
21. How much does being a member of your family affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is family to your life chances?

Gender

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand gender. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “gender”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

22. To which gender do you belong?

23. How does your community treat people of different genders?

24. What roles do people of different genders play? How are their experiences similar and how are their experiences different?

25. What problems do you have as a member of your gender?

26. What opportunities does your gender give you?

27. How are your problems and opportunities different from people of other genders in your community?

28. Do you think that your community has gender equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.

29. Now let’s think about outside of your community to all of South Africa. How does gender work in South Africa? Is it similar or different to your community?

30. In general, how do South Africans treat people of different genders?

31. What problems do people in your gender have in South Africa?

32. What opportunities do people in your gender have in South Africa?

33. Do you think that South Africa has gender equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.

34. How much does your gender affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is gender to your life chances?

Race

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand race. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “race”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

35. To which race do you belong?
36. What do people think of whites?
37. What roles do people of different races play? How are their experiences similar and how are their experiences different?
38. What problems do you have as a member of your race?
39. What opportunities does your race give you?
40. How are your problems and opportunities different from people of other races in your community?
41. Do you think that your community has race equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.
42. Now let’s think about outside of your community to all of South Africa. How does race work in South Africa? Is it similar or different to your community?
43. In general, how do South Africans treat people of different races?
44. What problems do people in your race have in South Africa?
45. What opportunities do people in your race have in South Africa?
46. Do you think that South Africa has race equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.
47. How much does your race affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is race to your life chances?

Social Class

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand race. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “race”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

48. To which social class do you belong?

49. How does your community treat people of different classes?

50. What roles do people of different classes play? How are their experiences similar and how are their experiences different?

51. What problems do you have as a member of your class?

52. What opportunities does your class give you?

53. How are your problems and opportunities different from people of other classes in your community?

54. Do you think that your community has class equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.

55. Now let’s think about outside of your community to all of South Africa. How does class work in South Africa? Is it similar or different to your community?

56. In general, how do South Africans treat people of different classes?

57. What problems do people in your class have in South Africa?

58. What opportunities do people in your class have in South Africa?

59. Do you think that South Africa has class equality, equity, or inequality? Explain.

60. How much does your class affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is class to your life chances?

The final two groups of questions that we are going to discuss today are a little bit different. The previous themes are about members of different social groups. These final 2 themes are about political organization, or the ways in which social groups organize.

Democracy

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand democracy. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “democracy”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

61. How do people in your community make decisions about things that affect the entire community?
62. Who is included in the decision-making process? (age, families, gender, race, class)
63. How is information shared in the community?
64. What problems do you have in terms of your involvement in decision-making processes in your community?
65. What opportunities do you have to become more involved in decision-making processes in your community?
66. Which of these best explains your community in relation to democracy?
 - a. fully democratic
 - b. democratic but with small problems
 - c. democratic but with many problems
 - d. undemocratic
67. How do the Rooibos cooperatives in your area make decisions about things that affect Rooibos farmers?

68. Who is included in the decision-making process?
69. How is cooperative information shared with farmers?
70. What problems do you have in terms of your involvement in decision-making processes in the cooperatives?
71. What opportunities do you have to become more involved in decision-making processes in the cooperatives?
72. Which of these best explains the Rooibos Cooperatives in relation to democracy?
- a. democratic
 - b. democratic but with small problems
 - c. democratic but with many problems
 - d. undemocratic
73. How much does democracy affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important is democracy to your life chances?

Bureaucracy

In our training we talked about how social researchers understand bureaucracy. After thinking about it, please tell me how you understand “bureaucracy”. People think differently, so any answer is ok. There is no correct answer here that you must give me.

74. What are the different bureaucracies in your communities?
75. What are the different bureaucracies outside of your communities that are involved with Rooibos?
76. How do the different bureaucracies in your community make decisions about things that affect everyone?

77. Who is included in the decision-making process? (age, families, gender, race, class)
78. How do the bureaucracies in your communities share information with everyone?
79. What problems do you have in terms of your involvement with bureaucracies in your communities?
80. What opportunities do you have to become more involved with bureaucracies in your communities?
81. Which of these best explains how the bureaucracies in your communities operate?
- a. democratic and transparent
 - b. democratic but not transparent
 - c. not democratic but transparent
 - d. not democratic and not transparent
82. Which of these best explains how the bureaucracies in your communities operate?
- a. powerful and efficient
 - b. powerful but not efficient
 - c. weak but efficient
 - d. weak and not efficient
83. How do the external bureaucracies that you know of make decisions about things that affect Rooibos farmers?
84. Who is included in the decision-making process?
85. How is industry information shared with farmers?
86. What problems do you have in terms of your involvement with external bureaucracies?
87. What opportunities do you have to become more involved with external bureaucracies?
88. Which of these best explains how external Rooibos bureaucracies operate?

- a. democratic and transparent
 - b. democratic but not transparent
 - c. not democratic but transparent
 - d. not democratic and not transparent
89. Which of these best explains how external bureaucracies operate?
- a. powerful and efficient
 - b. powerful but not efficient
 - c. weak but efficient
 - d. weak and not efficient
90. How much do bureaucracies affect your conditions, problems, and opportunities? How important are bureaucracies to your life chances?

Synthetic Questions

Today we have discussed the social concepts of age, families, gender, race, and class. To do this, we talked about the concepts of equality, equity, or inequality. We have also discussed the political concepts of democracy, and bureaucracy and the problems and opportunities with these ways of political organization. Researchers use these concepts to understand the experiences of people in the world, and there are many theories about these concepts. Now we are going to begin the process of figuring out which theories I should use in my writing by deciding which concepts best explain the experiences of Rooibos farmers.

1. Please rank the overall importance of the social concepts to your life chances.
2. Please rank the overall importance of the social concepts to your work chances.
3. Please rank the overall importance of the political concepts to your life chances.

4. Please rank the overall importance of the political concepts to your work chances.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance. Do you have any final questions or thoughts that you want to share with me?

Additional Farmer Leader Questions (ask informally before leaving community)

1. How has your involvement in this project improved your understanding of the kinds of conditions, opportunities, and constraints that exist in your community (internal)?
2. How has your involvement in this project improved your understanding of the kinds of conditions, opportunities, and constraints that exist in the broader Rooibos industry?
3. What kinds of Rooibos farmer conditions, opportunities, or constraints are you aware of that this project has not addressed?
4. What do you want to learn more about during your involvement in this project?
5. What skills did you have before this project that are helping you participate as a farmer leader?
6. What skills have you gained from your involvement in this project?
7. What skills do you still want to gain from your involvement in this project?
8. What contributions do you feel you can make to this project in the future?
9. Thinking about everything that we have learned during this week of interviews, what questions would you like me to ask in my interviews with governmental or organizational people who are involved in the Rooibos industry or in your communities?
10. Thinking about everything that we have learned during this week of interviews, what questions would you like me to ask in my interviews with Rooibos tea processors?

11. Thank you very much for your time and assistance. Do you have any final questions or thoughts that you want to share with me.

Cooperative and Association Management Questions

Hello, I am a researcher working on a project about small-scale Rooibos farmers. I do not work for the government or the processing company. I am a doctoral student and I am doing these interviews for my studies.

Before we begin the interview, it is important to share with you some things about this research so that there are no secrets. First, I will tell you how and why we are collecting the information. Second, I will tell you how we will use the information that we get. Third, I will tell you how we are organizing the information.

Let's talk about how we are collecting the information. I am talking to about 60 farmers from all over the Wupperthal area, Elim and with independent farmers in Nieuwoudtville. We are doing this so that we can understand the general situation of small-scale Rooibos farmers in South Africa. We are not choosing who we want to talk to. We have selected farmers randomly so that we can get complete information from as many different farmers as possible. I am also talking with cooperative management and board members as well as with some organizations.

We are collecting this information for two reasons. First, I will use the information to write a thesis for my professors, and after this is done, I hope to publish some articles. In my country, Rooibos is becoming a popular tea and people there are interested in knowing more about this tea and the farmers who grow it. Second, I am working on a project with Sandra Kruger to find out ways that farmers can get more money for their crop. We are working with 14 small-scale farmer leaders who were elected by their communities at the beginning of this project. We have all

signed a contract that we will not share any private information with anyone. I may ask some personal questions, but in our writings we will only talk about the general situation of Rooibos farmers, things like problems and opportunities. Once we have collected information from all the interviews, we will organize the information and write some general notes. The farmer leaders will share these notes with all the communities, so that everyone can give advice and participate equally. Once everyone agrees with the information, the farmer leaders can work with each other and the communities to make an action plan to fix some of the problems and help each other get more money for their Rooibos. The important thing here is that the communities can control and use the information together. I am not the expert...you and other farmers are the experts. You also have control over the interview. If I ask a question and you don't want to answer it, you don't need to. That is ok. If we finish the interview and you have other information you want to share that I didn't ask about, please feel free to share it. This interview isn't formal. It is like a conversation to share knowledge to each other. Since we won't be writing any private information, you can feel free to talk honestly to us. The more information you can give us today, the more we can know. We know there have been problems with communication about Rooibos, so our hope is to get complete information to share with everyone, so that everyone knows the situation and can work together to solve the general problems that farmers share.

Now I'm going to tell you how we plan to organize the information. First I am interested in learning about your "conditions" in the cooperative. Condition means a situation. How things are in your life, work, or community right now. Usually conditions are facts that everyone agrees with. For example bad roads in Wupperthal. Next, I want to learn what "opportunities" you feel you have in the cooperative. Opportunities are conditions, things that help you get what you want in your life, work, or community. These are usually opinions because everyone is different. Third,

I want to know what kinds of problems you have in the cooperative. Problems are also conditions that make it hard for you to get what you want in your life, work, or community. Like opportunities, they are usually opinions because everyone is different. For example, bad roads are a fact. But an old man may see them as a problem because it is difficult for him to travel to town. A young man may see the bad roads as an opportunity to get money for work to repair the roads.

If you don't mind, I will record our conversation on my tape-recorder since sometimes I cannot write things down fast enough. Will that be ok? What questions do you have for me now before we begin?

General Information

1. What languages do you speak?
2. How far did you go in school? How far have your children gone?
3. How many people live in your house? (Permanently? On weekends?)
4. Where were you born and where have you lived?
5. How would you describe your house?
6. Do you have electricity?
7. Do you have a toilet or water in the house?
8. What kinds of things are in your house that make your life comfortable, things like furniture or electronics?
9. Do you have transport to leave your community? If yes, is it affordable/reliable?
10. Is the medical care available to you affordable/reliable?

11. Has there been a time when you couldn't afford the basic needs of your family? How did you get by?
12. Thinking about the things that we just talked about, how would you describe your living conditions in general?

Economic Questions

13. What is your primary work?
14. What is your secondary work?
15. What crops do you farm and what animals do you have?
16. How much of the vegetables, fruit, meat do you sell and how much do you keep for yourself?
17. How many tons of Rooibos do you farm per year?
18. Do you sell all of your Rooibos the the coop?
19. How much do you sell your crop for? Has this changed in the past 3 years? If yes, how much did you sell your crop for in the past three years?
20. How much money were you paid for your Rooibos in 2007? 2008? 2009? 2010?
21. What other ways do you get money?
22. What percent of money in your house do you get from Rooibos farming?
23. Who decides what the money should be spent on in your house?
24. In the last 2 years have you had any savings? If yes, what are you saving for?

Cooperative Questions

25. What cooperative do you work for?

26. What current position do you hold? Explain your responsibilities.
27. What previous cooperative or association positions have you held? Explain your responsibilities.
28. When and how did your cooperative begin? Which organizations were involved in helping start the cooperative?
29. Which organizations have been involved in assisting the cooperative?
30. What kinds of training/projects have these organizations provided to cooperative members?
31. What has the cooperative paid farmers for wet tea each year?
32. Who are the buyers for each year?
33. What price do they pay for dry tea each year?
34. Does the cooperative have a constitution? In which languages? How has the constitution been disseminated to farmers?
35. How does the cooperative communicate with farmers?
36. What involvement does the cooperative have with Fair Trade certification?
37. How does the coop receive information about Fair Trade?
38. How long has it been certified?/Why did it lose certification?
39. What is the guaranteed Fair Trade minimum price? Is this for dual certification? What is the social premium?
40. What percentage of your tea is sold to Fair Trade buyers and what percentage is sold to mainstream buyers?
41. What is the price you receive from mainstream buyers?
42. How is Fair Trade, buyer, and price information communicated to farmers?

43. How does the cooperative decide to use social premium money?
44. What projects has the social premium money been spent on each year?
45. What involvement does the association have with organic certification?
46. How do organic certifiers share information with the cooperative?
47. How long has it been certified and by whom?/Why did it lose certification?
48. What involvement does the cooperative have with wild Rooibos?
49. How does the cooperative market its tea? What packaging or branding has the cooperative done?
50. What other certifications does the cooperative maintain?
51. What other certifications would the cooperative be interested in getting/why?
52. How many members of the management/board are men/women?
53. How many buyers are men/women?
54. What is the race of farmers? What is the race of management/board members? What is the race of buyers?
55. How many outstations are represented on the board?
56. What are the biggest problems with the cooperative right now?
57. What problems do the management or board have?
58. What problems do the farmers have to be more involved with cooperative decisions
59. What are the biggest opportunities with your cooperative?
60. What opportunities do the management or Board members have to improve problems?
61. What opportunities do the farmers have to be more involved in solving problems?
62. Ask some money questions about the current cooperative.

Association Questions

63. When and how did it begin? Which organizations were involved in helping start the association?
64. Which organizations were involved in helping the association while it was operational?
65. What kinds of training/projects did these organizations provide to association members or management?
66. Who were the buyers at that time?
67. What price did they pay for dry tea each year?
68. What did the association pay farmers for wet tea each year?
69. How did the association communicate with farmers?
70. Did the association have a constitution? In which languages? How was the constitution disseminated to farmers?
71. What involvement did the association have with Fair Trade certification? How long was it certified?
72. What is the guaranteed Fair Trade minimum price? Is this for dual certification? What is the social premium?
73. What percentage of association tea was sold to Fair Trade buyers and what percentage was sold to mainstream buyers?
74. What was the price the association received from mainstream buyers?
75. How was Fair Trade, buyer, and price information communicated to farmers?
76. How did the association decide to use social premium money?
77. What projects was the social premium money spent on each year?

78. What involvement did the association have with organic certification? How long was it certified?
79. How many members of the management/board were men/women?
80. How many buyers were men/women?
81. How many outstations were represented on the board?
82. What involvement did the association have with Heiveld Cooperative and/or EMG?
83. How did Fairpackers begin?
84. Which organizations were involved with Fairpackers?
85. How many farmers were involved with Fairpackers?
86. How did Fairpackers fall apart?
87. What is going on now with Fairpackers?
88. What were the biggest problems with the association?
89. What problems did the management or board have?
90. What problems did the farmers have to be more involved?
91. How did the association fall apart?
92. What were the biggest opportunities with the association?
93. What opportunities did the management or Board members have?
94. What opportunities did the farmers have to be more involved?
95. Ask some money questions about the current association.

Summary Questions

96. What kinds of training or projects would you like to see?
97. How can organizations provide better assistance to farmer cooperatives?

98. What can you personally do to help solve the tea problems in the community?
99. How can you work with farmer leaders to help solve the problems? How can they become more involved in the tea community?

Sample Organizational Interview Questions

South African Rooibos Council (SARC) Organizational Questions

1. Explain to me how SARC formed and how it is currently organized.
 - a. What are the major groups involved with SARC including government agencies, industry associations, major companies, and producer groups?
 - b. What primary role does SARC play in South Africa's Rooibos network?
 - c. What types of research does SARC support and what are future research plans?
 - a. Organic seedlings, etc.
 - d. What are SARC's short-term strategies/goals in terms of Rooibos engagement?
 - e. What are SARC's mid-term strategies/goals in terms of Rooibos engagement?
 - f. What are SARC's long-term strategies/goals in terms of Rooibos engagement?

BEE Questions

2. How does SARC engage with producer support?
3. How does SARC engage with BEE?
4. In your opinion, what are the primary challenges for black economic empowerment?
5. In your opinion, what are the primary opportunities for black economic empowerment?

Working Group Plans

6. Explain how SARC plans to work with Wupperthal farmers.
 - a. What services will SARC deliver to Wupperthal farmers? How?
 - b. Emerging Farmer Working Group, Women's Networking Group
 - c. How can these groups be linked to commercial farmers so that all farmers can identify and collaborate on mutual goals?
7. In your opinion, what challenges hinder Rooibos farmers from maximizing their political and/or market participation?
 - a. emerging farmer specific, Rooibos specific, hired labor
8. In your opinion, what primary opportunities do Rooibos farmers have to maximize political and/or market participation?
 - a. emerging farmer specific, Rooibos specific, hired labor
9. What are the major problems involved in producer support provision?
10. What are the major opportunities involved in producer support provision?
11. What is the potential for collaborating with alternative standards and certification systems?
 - a. What are the primary problems?
 - b. What are the primary opportunities?
12. What Rooibos-specific materials could you provide me (for both smallholder and hired labor sectors)?
13. As an expert, what policy recommendations might you have to improve multilateral producer support networking and collaboration?
 - a. How can SARC become a clear leader in terms of driving industry collaboration?

Concluding Questions

14. What are your best practices?
15. How can you work with farmer leaders to help solve problems?
 - a. What is your advice for them?
 - b. How can they become more involved in socio-political networking?
16. Are there any reports I should look up that will provide relevant information?
17. Is there anything else you would like to discuss with me?

General Industry Interview Questions

1. Explain to me how the Rooibos tea industry is organized?
2. What are the major groups involved in the industry, including government agencies, industry associations, and major conditions in buying tea from producers, including transportation arrangements, regulations, inspections etc?
3. What are the major procedures involved in processing tea, including transportation arrangements, regulations, inspections etc?
4. What are the major procedures involved in exporting tea from South Africa, including transportation arrangements, export regulations, inspections etc?
5. Do US exports differ from European or other exports? How?
6. Does your company engage with certified tea? If yes, which certifications do you engage with, how long have you been certified, and how does this work?

- a. Who are the major groups involved in Fair Trade and other certified exports, including government agencies, industry associations, and major companies? Are they different than those in the conventional trade?
- b. What are the major procedures involved in buying Fair Trade and other certified Rooibos teas from producers? How are they different than conventional trade?
- c. What are the major procedures involved in processing Fair Trade and other certified Rooibos teas? Are they different than conventional trade?
- d. What are the major procedures involved in exporting Fair Trade and other certified Rooibos teas from South Africa?
- e. Who are the major groups involved in US Fair Trade exports, including government agencies, industry associations, and major companies? Are they different than those focused on exports to Europe?

Specific Questions

7. When and how did your company begin? Which organizations were involved?
8. What was your organizational structure when it began?
9. What industry networks does your company belong to/participate in?
10. Who do you buy from?
 - a. Explain your relationship to commercial producers/small farmers.
 - b. How many tons (total) do you buy from producers each year? How many from commercial farmers/how many from small farmers?
 - c. What is the average amount of tea (in tons) that small farmers deliver to you?
 - d. How do you communicate prices and other information?

- e. What price have you paid producers in the past five years?
11. Who are your national buyers/export buyers? What countries do you export your tea to?
- a. How do you communicate with national buyers/international buyers?
 - b. How many tons do you sell each year to national markets/export markets?
 - c. At what prices do you sell your final tea products?
12. What can you tell me about organics?
- a. Who is your certifier?
 - b. How much of your tea is organic certified (tons)?
 - c. Who are your organic buyers?
 - d. What is the premium price that you pay to organic producers?
 - e. What is the premium price that you get for organic sales?
13. What can you tell me about Fair Trade?
- a. How much of your tea is Fair Trade certified?
 - b. Who are your Fair Trade buyers? (all dual?)
 - c. What is the guaranteed Fair Trade minimum price? Is this for dual certification?
 - d. What is the social premium?
 - e. What percentage of your tea is sold to Fair Trade buyers?
14. How many employees do you have?
- a. How many employees are men/women?
 - b. What is the racial breakdown in terms of your employees?
 - c. What is the average age of an employee?
15. How many members of management?
- a. How many members of the management are men/women?

- b. What is the racial breakdown in your management positions?
 - c. What is the average age of a person in management?
16. What are your company's biggest problems in terms of buying from producers?
 17. What are your company's biggest opportunities in terms of buying from producers?
 18. What are your company's biggest problems in terms of national markets?
 19. What are your company's biggest opportunities in terms of national markets?
 20. What are your company's biggest problems in terms of export markets?
 21. What are your company's biggest opportunities in terms of export markets?
 22. What is your company's future planning in terms of market expansion—do you plan on pursuing/expanding alternative certifications?

Additional Data

23. Do you have tonnage/sales data available that I can use in my value chain analysis?
24. Are there specific reports I should look for or people I should talk to that you think would help this study?

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFIT	Association for Fairness in Trade
AFN	African Fairtrade Network
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ANC	African National Congress
APO	African Political Organization
ASNAPP	Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products
BAWSI	Black Association of the Agricultural Sector
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BBBEE	Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment
CE	Common Era
CFAT	Center for Fair and Alternative Trade
CNTP	Cape Natural Tea Products
COFTA	Cooperation for Fair Trade in Africa
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EMG	Environmental Monitoring Group
FLO-Cert	Independent certification agency for fairtrade products
FLO	Fairtrade International
FTA	Fairtrade Africa
FTSA	Fairtrade South Africa
FTTSA	Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa

GCBC	Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor
HortCRSP	Horticulture Collaborative Research Support Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAA	Participatory Action Analysis
PAP	Participatory Action Planning
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PAToT	Participatory Action Training-of-Trainers
PCN	Participatory Commodity Networking
PCNR	Participatory Commodity Network Research
PIE	Participatory Information Exchange
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PLAAS	Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies
SAFN	Southern African Fair Trade Network
SARC	South African Rooibos Council
SFTMS	Sustainable Fair Trade Management System
SKA	Sandra Kruger and Associates
ToT	Training-of-Trainers
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WARD	Women in Agriculture and Rural Development
WFTO	World Fair Trade Organization